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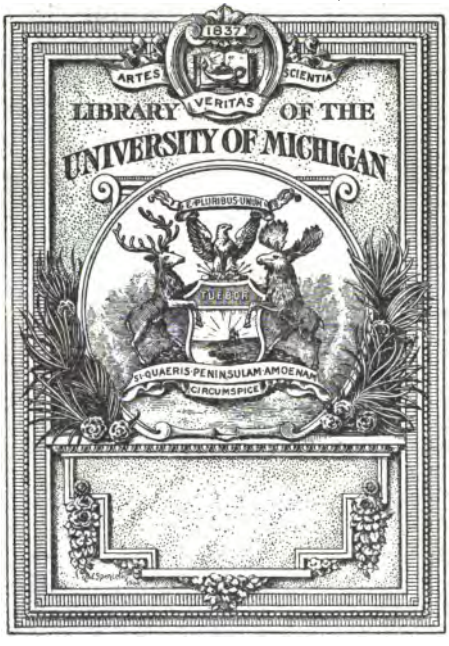

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ADAM AYLIFFE AND MR. HYLTON.

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WORKS

OF

13495

SAMUEL WARREN

D. C. L. F. R. S.

VOL. IV.

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS
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Rev? W. C. Lukis.

NOW AND THEN

——THROUGH A GLASS DARKLY

'SIRRAH,' QUOTH HE,
'THE HOUR IS COME FOR THEE TO DIE:
THE REASON WHY, I'LL SETTLE AFTER; SO FOLLOW,
LIKE A MAN.' — *The Pilgrim.*

BY

SAMUEL WARREN

D. C. L. F. R. S.

A NEW EDITION

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS
EDINBURGH AND LONDON
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TO

EDWARD WALPOLE WARREN,

MY YOUNGER SON,

THIS WORK IS INSCRIBED,

AS A TOKEN OF LOVE,

BY

HIS FATHER.

LONDON, 18*th December* 1847.

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CONTENTS

OF

THE FOURTH VOLUME.

NOW AND THEN.

THE LILY AND THE BEE.

THE INTELLECTUAL AND MORAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE PRESENT AGE.

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PREFACE TO THE PRESENT EDITION.

It will afford the Author of *Now and Then* unspeakable satisfaction, to find that work received, in its new form, with the popular favour so liberally accorded to its two predecessors, the *Diary of a Late Physician*, and *Ten Thousand A-Year*. If ever a work was written in a catholic spirit, with a fervent desire to advance the cause of Christian morality, and illustrate, by as interesting incidents as the Author could devise, the adaptation of its doctrines to the most perplexing and appalling conditions in which man can be placed on earth, it was *Now and Then*. He has never heard an objection to it from either Protestant or Catholic, Churchman or Dissenter; but on the contrary has repeatedly received from each, strong expressions of gratification, and a desire to see the work circulating widely among the humbler classes of society,—with whom are, indeed, the best sympathies of the Author's heart.

In this work the two principal characters are a noble Peer, and a nobler Peasant; but the lofty character of the former was long disfigured by pride and vindictiveness, till the rock was smitten by the thunderbolt of an awful Providential visitation; and ere long gushed forth the waters of humility, resignation, and forgiveness. The Peasant was of a nature every whit as noble as the Peer; but that nobility was from his youth sublimed by the religion of his Bible: the precepts of which sustained him under the pressure of fearful suffering, and at length linked together in humble love and piety, the hearts of both Peer and Peasant, as in the sight of *Him* who *is no respecter of persons*.

The mind of man can scarcely have presented to it any more awful subject of contemplation, than the solemn condemnation to death, by a just but erring tribunal, of an innocent man. It should teach, in tremendous tones, the lesson of caution; not, however, to the extent of palsying the hand of justice. And as for the victim of that error to which all human institutions are liable, what language can do justice to our agonising sympathy? Who can realise the state of mind and feeling excited in him? Who can conceive of any source of consolation and succour, but ONE—that to which the beloved minister of religion pointed Adam Ayliffe's despairing eye, in the condemned cell?

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These are the substantial lessons designed to be taught by *Now and Then;* and as they indicate the objects with which it was written, so they influence the heart of the writer in sending it forth finally from his hand, and wishing the book, God-speed!

It may be proper to add, for the information of foreign as well as some English readers, that the administration of the criminal law of this country has been altered in various particulars specified in the ensuing pages. At the period, however, at which the events in this tale are supposed to have happened, the criminal law was administered as there represented. It must not, however, be supposed that the law of murder, and its capital punishment, have undergone any change; but the sanguinary character of our criminal law, at the period referred to, and which is pointedly indicated by a passage to be found in the eighteenth chapter,* has yielded to the humane and benignant spirit of modern legislation.

INNER TEMPLE, LONDON, *June* 1854.

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* Page 163. In the time of Sir William Blackstone—that is, nearly a century ago—"*to steal a handkerchief, or other trifle above the value of twelve pence, privately from one's person, is made capital!*"—4 Comm. 16.

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PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION.

I AM at a loss for terms in which to express my sense of the favour with which this work has been received by the public, both at home and abroad. Two large editions, thrice as large as I could have contemplated, before yielding to the confidence of my publishers, were exhausted almost immediately, and the second has been now out of print for several months. I greatly regret the delay which has occurred in bringing out this Third Edition, and the disappointment which may have been felt by numerous applicants for copies of the work. That delay has been occasioned by the pressure of numerous engagements, which prevented my bestowing upon the present Edition the careful revision which it has now received. The necessity of that revision may be accounted for, by the rapidity and suddenness with which *Now and Then* was written, and passed through the press. Not a line of the manuscript was in existence previously to near midnight on the 20th November 1847; yet it was in the hands of the printer at a very early hour in the morning of the 9th of December, and was actually published on Saturday the 18th of December; on which day, and the ensuing Monday, the entire Edition was disposed of, and the second in preparation. During the brief interval above mentioned, I wrote principally in the night-time, my days being necessarily otherwise occupied. While making these statements, however, I anxiously deprecate the imputation of having rushed before an indulgent public without due and respectful consideration; for this story, the elements of which had been long floating in my mind, had been thoroughly thought out, in all its parts, during the two months immediately preceding the day on which I began to write; and I venture to doubt whether many modern books of this description, have occasioned their authors more deliberate and anxious consideration, than I had bestowed on this one, before sitting down to write. Whatever faults of execution and detail may even still be found, this at least I can truly affirm, that every character, conversation, and incident introduced, is the result of much reflection, and in strict subordination to a determined purpose, steadily kept in view from beginning to end. The plan may be faulty, and the conception unsatisfactory; but such as it is, it has been completely carried out.

I had, as I conceived, very important objects in view, in writing this work; but it would be almost an impertinence here to indicate them, for they are sufficiently obvious to a thinking reader. I have, however, two observations to offer on this subject. First,—that I advisedly abstained, for grave reasons, from so contriving the plot of the story, as to make it in accordance with what is understood by the words "*poetical justice.*" Had I been so minded, few experienced readers can avoid perceiving, from the ensuing pages, how abundantly easy it would have been to carry such an intention into effect. In the second place, I solemnly disclaim an object which a lead-

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ing organ of public opinion,* suggested as likely to have been contemplated by the writer of this work—viz. to contribute towards the abolition of capital punishments, even in cases of murder. I am, on the contrary, quite agreed in opinion, on that subject, with the able reviewer of this work, in the journal above alluded to. I had, in truth, given the subject great consideration, long before writing *Now and Then;* and, entertaining these views, I feel it rather hard to be represented, as has been the case, not only in this country, but on the Continent and in America, as favouring and endeavouring to advance doctrines which I repudiate. I acknowledge that, as a subsidiary object, I have endeavoured to illustrate the awful liability to error, to which even the highest and best human intellects and institutions are liable, in judging of, and dealing with, especially judicially, the events which happen around us, in the mysterious scene of action in which God has placed mankind —where He has ordained that we should *know in part only*, and *see through a glass darkly*. These are topics suggesting many solemnising and salutary reflections. On the particular subject under consideration, I wish here to express my entire concurrence with the critic above mentioned; who says that "if we are to suspend a punishment essential to public example, and justified by the laws of God, as well as by the oldest sanctions of man, until human institutions are rendered absolutely perfect and unerring, we must, on the same grounds, stop short also of inflicting smaller penalties for secondary crimes, and finally resolve to inflict upon our fellow-creatures no punishment whatever."

I feel constrained to say, that the almost unanimous approbation of this work expressed by the public press—overlooking, in a noble spirit, defects of detail, while recognising good intentions—has deeply, indelibly impressed my heart. I have also received a surprising number of private communications, from persons in all ranks of society, applauding the scope and tendency of the work, and many of them urging me to print it in a form and at a price suitable for even more extensive distribution than it has hitherto attained. I humbly hope that the feelings and intentions with which *Now and Then* was written will, as some of those communications have suggested, bear that terrible test, deathbed reflection. I regarded the publishing of this work as a bold experiment; and it is impossible to express the anxiety with which the issue, destined greatly to surpass my most sanguine expectations, was awaited.

The *title*† of the work has been variously remarked on. It was deemed by myself to be peculiarly significant and suggestive; but it was intended that, while awakening curiosity, the propriety of the words should become fully apparent, only on finishing the perusal of the work: when "NOW AND THEN" might present themselves under *several* aspects, to one who might have taken the trouble to reflect on the course of the narrative.

The fabric of the story is purposely simple and slight; but it appeared to afford opportunities for exhibiting human nature under circumstances of exquisite interest, difficulty, and perplexity, such as are calculated to rouse into action its strongest passions, and highest faculties. The aim of the writer was to deduce, from such a display, lessons of sterling value. And, finally, this work was, with all its imperfections, composed under a strong sense of the serious moral responsibility attaching to him who ventures to write for the public; especially if he believe that what he writes has the faintest chance of being read by many, or influencing the feelings, opinions, or conduct of ONE.

* The *Times* newspaper.

† For NOW we see through a glass, darkly; but THEN face to face: NOW I know in part; but THEN shall I know even as also I am known.—1 COR. xiii. 12.

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NOW AND THEN.

CHAPTER I.

Somewhere about a hundred years ago (but in which of our good kings' reigns, or in which of our sea-coast counties, is needless to be known) there stood alone, at a little distance from the secluded village of Milverstoke, a cottage of the better sort, which no one could have seen, without its suggesting to him that he was looking at a cottage of the true old English kind. It was most snug in winter, and in summer very beautiful; glistening, as then it did, in all its fragrant loveliness of jessamine, honeysuckle, and sweet-brier. There, also, stood a bee-hive, in the centre of the garden, which, stretching down to the road-side, was so filled with flowers, especially roses, that nothing could be seen of the ground in which they grew; wherefore it might well be that the busy little personages who occupied the tiny mansion so situated, conceived that the lines had fallen to them in very pleasant places indeed. The cottage was built substantially, though originally somewhat rudely, and principally of sea-shore stones. It had a thick thatched overhanging roof, and the walls were low. In front there were two latticed windows, one above the other. The lower one belonged to *the* room of the building; the higher, which was much smaller, belonged to what might be called the chief bedroom; for there were three little dormitories — two being small, and at the back of the cottage. Not far behind, and somewhat to the left, stood an elm-tree, its trunk covered with ivy; and it so effectually sheltered from the sea-breezes the modest little fabric beneath, and otherwise so materially contributed to its snug picturesque appearance, that there could be little doubt of the tree's having reached its maturity before there was any such structure for it to grace and protect. Beside this tree was a wicket, by which was entered a small slip of ground, half garden and half orchard. All the foregoing formed the remnant of a little freehold property, which had belonged to its present owner, and to his family before him, for several generations. The initial letter (A) of their name, Ayliffe, was rudely cut, in old English character, in a piece of stone forming a sort of centre facing over the doorway; and no one then living there knew when that letter had been cut. The present owner of the cottage was Adam Ayliffe, once a substantial, but now a reduced yeoman, well stricken in years, being at the time now spoken of not far from his sixty-eighth year; the crown of his head was bald, and finely formed, and the little hair that he had

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left was of a silvery colour, verging on white. His countenance and figure were striking to an observant beholder, who would have said at once, "That man is of a firm and upright character, and has seen trouble,"—all which was indeed distinctly written in his open Saxon features. His eye was of a clear blue, and steadfast in its gaze; and when he spoke, it was with a certain quaintness, which seemed in keeping with his simple and stern character. All who had ever known Ayliffe entertained for him a deep respect. He was of an independent spirit, somewhat taciturn, and of a retiring contemplative humour. His life was utterly blameless, regulated throughout by the purifying and elevating influence of Christianity. The excellent vicar of the parish in which he lived, reverenced him, holding him up as a pattern, and pointing him out as one of whom it might be humbly said, *Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile.* Yet the last few years of his life had been passed in great trouble. Ten years before had occurred, in the loss of his wife, who had been every way worthy of him, the first great sorrow of his life. After twenty years spent together in happiness greater than tongue could tell, it had pleased God, who had given her to him, to take her away — suddenly, indeed, but very gently. He woke one morning, when she woke not, but lay sweetly sleeping the sleep of death. His *Sarah* was gone, and thenceforth his great hope was to follow her, and be with her again. His spirit was stunned for a while, but murmured not; saying, with resignation, "The Lord hath given, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." A year or two afterwards occurred to him a second trouble, great, but of a different kind. He was suddenly reduced almost to beggary. To enable the son of an old deceased friend to become a collector of public rates in an adjoining county, Ayliffe had unsuspiciously become his surety. The man, however, for whom he had done this service, fell soon afterwards into intemperate and dissolute habits; dishonesty, as usual, soon followed; and poor Ayliffe was horrified one evening by being called upon, his principal having absconded, a great defaulter, to contribute to repair the deficiency, to the full extent of his bond. At the time of this sad event, Ayliffe was the freehold owner of some forty or fifty acres of ground adjoining his cottage, besides having some small sum of money advanced upon mortgage to a neighbour, the interest of which he was setting apart for a purpose which will be presently mentioned. But all was suddenly sacrificed:—not only the little accumulation of interest, but the principal from which it had grown,—and not only that, but more than half of his land, to make good the loss for which he had so unhappily become responsible. This stroke seemed to prostrate poor Ayliffe, not only on account of his severe pecuniary loss, but his cruelly betrayed confidence. Nor was this all. His favourite purpose had been suddenly defeated; that purpose having been to make a provision for the marriage of his only child, a son, called after himself, Adam, — being the fifth Adam Ayliffe, father and son, during as many generations. That fondly-desired object was now unattainable; and father and son shortly afterwards experienced a bitter proof of the too frequent fickleness of earthly friendships. The girl whose hand had been pledged to young Adam readily broke off the match at her parents' desire; and she being very pretty, and they so well to do in the world as would have enabled them with ease to set Adam Ayliffe and their daughter comfortably going in life, little difficulty was found in obtaining a successor to poor Adam, in a thriving young farmer, whom, however, if the truth must be told, she had originally jilted in his favour. And possibly some palliative of her misconduct in the matter might have been derived from the fact, that Adam was not only of an old family, and would have succeeded to no inconsiderable hereditary property, but was also one of the finest

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young fellows in the county, with a handsome countenance, of a most engaging frankness, a figure tall and well formed, possessed of surpassing activity and strength, and of a daring and reckless courage. In all manly exercises he excelled every competitor; and as to his feats at singlestick, they were famous in several adjoining counties. Every one, in short, liked Adam Ayliffe; he had a laugh and a good word for all whom he met, would do anything to oblige anybody, and seemed not to know that there was such a thing in the world to be looked after as—self.

It was everywhere said that a handsomer couple than Adam and Phœbe would make, was not to be found. But, poor soul! all his prospects were, as has been seen, in one moment blighted; and Phœbe's heartless desertion hurt him far more than the poverty, with its humiliating incidents, into which he and his father had so unexpectedly been plunged. His buoyancy of spirits had fled for ever, but the manly simplicity of character which he had inherited from his father remained. Much, however, of that father's pious teaching it took to soothe the ruffled spirit of his son. Long was it before any one could exchange a smile with Adam Ayliffe the younger. Alas! what a contrast now, between father and son going heretofore together arm-in-arm to church, the one with his great walking-stick, broad hat, and long rough blue coat, and face of grave but not austere composure; the other gaily clad, and his hat somewhat jauntily set upon his curly nut-brown hair, nodding to this one, smiling to the other, and taking off his hat to the elder folk! As the two would stand suddenly uncovered while the parson passed or met them, on his way into the church, his heart yearned towards them both. He thoroughly loved and respected them, and was proud of two such specimens of the English yeoman; and, above all, he was charmed with the good example which they uniformly set to all his other parishioners. He had from Adam's boyhood entertained a liking for him, and had personally bestowed no inconsiderable pains upon his education, which, though plain, as suited his position, was yet sound and substantial. Greatly concerned had been the Vicar at the disasters befalling the Ayliffes; nay, he went so far as secretly to make an effort to reclaim the fickle Phœbe: but in vain—it was plainly not to be; and then he sought to satisfy the sorely discomfited suitor, that he might depend upon it all would turn out for the best.

The Rev. Henry Hylton, M.A., at the time now spoken of, had been Vicar of Milverstoke for nearly twenty years. It was a Cambridge College living, of about £300 a-year; the first that had fallen in for his acceptance, after he had obtained his Fellowship, to which, in consequence of his distinguished degree, he had been elected almost immediately. He was a man of good family; of powerful intellect and accurate scholarship; deeply read in divinity; of signal decision of character, lofty independence of spirit, and fervent piety. He, too, was naturally of a cheerful disposition, but had been saddened by domestic affliction; for marrying, shortly after coming to the living, a woman every way fitted for her post, of sweet and most amiable temper, they had had five children, all of whom had died, except the youngest, a little girl, for whom it may easily be believed that they entertained an anxious love passing expression.

After young Adam's troubles had come upon him, by way of occupying or diverting his attention, Mr Hylton would have him often to the parsonage, on some kind pretext or other; one being to copy out some old sermons, the manuscript of which had become too small to be read in the pulpit conveniently, the good Vicar's eyesight not being as clear and strong as it had been originally. Thus it was that Adam came to be constantly thrown into the way of a certain maid of Mr Hylton's—Sarah, whose history was short, but not uninteresting. She had been left an

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orphan, when young, by a poor widow, a parishioner of Milverstoke, who had died some years before; and Mrs Hylton, having taken a liking to the girl, had had her carried, about her fourteenth year, to the parsonage, and brought up under her own eye. Sarah proved a good and grateful girl, and became useful, being a good needlewoman, and discreet and intelligent; in short, she was a favourite with both Mr and Mrs Hylton. Though her countenance was pleasing, it could not be called pretty; its expression was pensive and thoughtful; her voice was soft, and pleasant to hear; and her figure slight, but well proportioned. Now Adam and she were often thrown together, for he used to sit in the housekeeper's room, in the evenings, copying out Mr Hylton's sermons, none other being present than the housekeeper and Sarah: and no one can wonder that Adam should often talk of his troubles, particularly touching Phœbe. The good housekeeper pronounced her a hussy, who would live to repent her shameful conduct; and assured Adam that there were quite as good fish in the sea as had ever come out; he all the while listening in silence, or with a sigh, and shaking his head. The last observation, however, imperceptibly grew more grateful to his feelings whenever it was repeated. At length it occurred to him that Sarah, who was never very voluble, always preserved silence when such topic, or anything akin to it, was introduced, and looked very steadily at her needlework. One's own heart indicates the natural result of all this. On one such occasion as that just referred to, Sarah ventured to lift up her eyes, for an instant, from her work, and glanced timidly at Adam, whom she imagined to be busy writing; but behold! he was looking in silence, and rather earnestly, at her. Thus was kindled the first spark of love between Adam and Sarah; and, after several years' quiet courtship, long discouraged, but never absolutely forbidden, by both Mr and Mrs Hylton, Adam married Sarah from the parsonage, with the full consent of all persons concerned; and then took her home to the cottage, where old Adam Ayliffe, as he kissed the pale cheek of the meek and trembling new-comer, welcomed them both with a solemn and affecting benediction that was quite patriarchal.

"Daughter-in-law," said he, "I am poor; so is this thy husband; and we may become poorer; but here is that which will make those rich who rely on it. Give me thy hand, Sarah, and thine, Adam," said he, and placed them, with his own, upon the cover of the old family Bible: "Promise, with the blessing of Him who gave us this Book, never to look beyond it, in time of trouble, nor then to forget it. Thus promised my Sarah when God gave her to me, who hath since taken her away again!"

The old man's voice here trembled, but failed him not. Then he tenderly embraced both his son and daughter-in-law, the latter weeping much; and they sat down to their frugal repast with such cheerfulness as they might.

Adam and his son had for some time betaken themselves to labour for their subsistence; and on this marriage taking place, both found it necessary to redouble their exertions, in order to meet their augmented expenditure; for small though it might be at first, prudence warned them to prepare against any probable increase of it. Bitter, bitter indeed was it to young Ayliffe, when first he saw his venerable father enter into the capacity of a hireling; but not so with that father, who heartily thanked God for the strength which he still had, and the opportunity of profitably exerting that strength. 'Twas somewhat late in the day, to be sure, but the necessity had not arisen from his fault. Labour was the lot of man; this he knew, and was reverently content with that lot.

These three were the sole occupants of the cottage: and Mrs Ayliffe, being, as one might say, neatness personified, felt a pride in keeping her pretty residence in fitting order. Often, however, when her husband and father-in-law were absent at their labour, to

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which they would go early, and from which they would often return late, she thought with trembling solicitude about the future; for in due time she had the prospect of becoming a mother. The sight of her venerable father-in-law thus daily going to, and returning from, his labour, at a time when he ought to have been enjoying the repose suited to his years, greatly distressed her; and sometimes she would secretly reproach herself for having added even a straw's weight to his burthens, by becoming the wife of his son. That son, however, loved her tenderly, and with, perhaps, a more lasting affection than ever he might have entertained for her whose place she had so unexpectedly occupied. Both he and his father engaged themselves in their labours with sustained alacrity. But a year and a half's severe and constant exertion told more heavily on old Adam's impaired physical powers than he had calculated upon; and to his grievous mortification, the doctor at length positively forbade his resuming work of any kind for several months to come. So the old man was not only obliged to lay up, but to incur considerable expense by medical attendance, rendered necessary by a serious injury which strong exertion, at his time of life, was but too sure to occasion.

About a year after her marriage, poor Mrs Ayliffe brought her husband, at the peril of her own life, a son. She had, indeed, a terrible time of it, and did not quit her bed for three months, nor the cottage for two months after that, during the whole of that period being quite unable to manage her household affairs,—small, it was true, but requiring, nevertheless, constant attention. Alas! how were all these sadly increased exigencies, and that of medical attendance, to be encountered and provided for? There was but the labour of young Ayliffe, itself producing no great results, but still sufficient, with good management and frugality, to supply their daily necessities. They had also no house-rent to pay, but how long might that be the case? For already had arisen the sad necessity of parting with another portion of the land which still constituted the family property. It had cost old Ayliffe a bitter pang to sacrifice an acre of that land: yet had he been obliged to do so, and was now again driven to repeat the sacrifice. All hitherto sold had been purchased on account of the Earl of Milverstoke—a nobleman of ancient lineage and vast possessions, whose principle country residence, Milverstoke Castle, a magnificent structure, stood at nearly two miles' distance from Ayliffe's cottage. Much must presently be said of this distinguished personage; for such, indeed, he was, even were it only in respect of his lofty personal character, his great talents, and the high political position which he had occupied. Suffice it at present to say, that the Earl did not give himself much personal concern about the management of his estates, but devolved it upon others—upon local agents, all under the control of one principal, who lived in London. The Earl's agent at Milverstoke was Mr Oxley, formerly a land-valuer in the adjoining county—a shrewd and energetic man, devoted to the Earl's interests, but occasionally acting in a way not likely to secure to his noble employer the goodwill of those who were connected with him as tenants or neighbours; for little cared Mr Oxley about hurting the feelings of any one who stood between him and any of his purposes. He it was who had negotiated the purchase of the land which old Ayliffe had been forced to sell, in consequence of the villany of the person for whom he had become bound; and the object of Mr Oxley, in making that purchase, was the furtherance of a favourite scheme which he had for some time had in view, and which had met with the Earl's own approbation, of making a new approach to the Castle, through the woods at the back of it, instead of the present road, which was somewhat inconvenient with reference to the highway, and very circuitous.

This object could not, however, be

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attained, unless all the remaining property of Ayliffe could be acquired by the Earl, whose agent had teased and harassed Ayliffe on the subject, to an extent which only one of so well-regulated a temper as his could have tolerated with anything like calmness. The new road to the Castle, it was intended, should pass exactly over the present site of the cottage, which therefore had long been a grievous eyesore to Mr Oxley, as a monument at once of his own abortive negotiation, and, as *he* chose to consider it, Ayliffe's dogged obstinacy. In vain the old man earnestly told him that it would break his heart to be separated for ever from the property of his fathers—to see their residence pulled down, and all trace of it destroyed; in vain did the selfish matter-of-fact man of business hear that Ayliffe had solemnly promised his father, on his death-bed, not to part with the cottage so long as he had a crust of bread to eat in it, and a son to succeed to it. Mr Oxley largely increased, and finally doubled, his original offer, on hearing these cunning pretexts, for such to him they appeared, urged so pertinaciously; but the old yeoman was not to be tempted: and his resolution irritated Mr Oxley the more, because the latter, never dreaming of having to encounter such an obstacle, had somewhat precipitately pledged himself to the Earl, that his lordship might depend upon the new road to the Castle being laid down by a day which had—long passed by. A last and desperate effort was made by Mr Oxley, on behalf of his noble principal, who little dreamed of the real state of the case: or, high-minded as he was, he would have sacrificed a thousand acres of his richest land rather than have sanctioned the ungracious and unwarrantable proceedings attempted on his behalf. But his lordship had only recently made Milverstoke his constant residence, on his somewhat sudden retirement from public life, and probably knew little or nothing of what went on in his name, and professedly on his behalf; while of Ayliffe and his property the Earl knew little more than that there was a small freeholder of that name, living at a short distance from the Castle, whose slight interest in the soil it would be necessary to purchase, before the contemplated approach could be made from the high-road to the Castle, On the occasion just alluded to, as witnessing the last eager effort of Mr Oxley to effect his purpose, Ayliffe and his son were together in the cottage; and the former, unprovoked by much intemperate and coarse language, which, however, greatly incensed the latter, finally, but quietly, told Mr Oxley that he would talk no more with him on the subject: "And as for my Lord," he added, with a calm though somewhat stern smile, "let him be satisfied with what he hath; the Castle for him, the cottage for me!"

"Be not a fool, Adam Ayliffe—know your interest and duty better," replied Mr Oxley; "depend upon it, I will not throw all this my trouble away, nor shall my Lord be disappointed. Listen, therefore, once for all, to reason, and take what is offered, which is princely, and be thankful!"

"Well, well," said Ayliffe; "it seems that I cannot say that which will suit thee, good Mr Oxley. Yet once more will I try, and with words that perhaps may reach the ear which mine cannot. Wilt thou hear me?"

"Ay, I will hear, sure enough, friend Adam," said Mr Oxley, curiously; on which Ayliffe took down from the top of the clock, which stood in the corner, a large old brass-bound Bible, and, opening it on his lap, read with deliberate emphasis, as follows:—

"Naboth, the Jezreelite, had a vineyard which was in Jezreel, hard by the palace of Ahab, king of Samaria.

"And Ahab spake unto Naboth, saying, 'Give me thy vineyard, that I may have it for a garden of herbs, because it is near unto my house: and I will give thee for it a better vineyard than it; or if it seem good to thee, I will give thee the worth of it in money.'

"And Naboth said unto Ahab, 'The Lord forbid it me, that I should give the inheritance of my fathers unto thee.'"

When he had read these last words,

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which he did very solemnly, Ayliffe closed the Bible, and gazed at Mr Oxley in silence. For a moment the latter seemed somewhat staggered by what he saw, and what he had heard; but at length—"Oh, ho, Adam! do you make your Bible speak for you in business?" said he, in a tone of rude jocularity. "Well, I shall wish you good-day for some little while, it may be, and good luck to you here. It is somewhat of a bit of a place," he continued, as he drew on his gloves, glancing, at the same time, contemptuously round the little room, "to set such store by; but be patient—be patient, Adam; there is one somewhat larger that will be ready for you by-and-by."

This insulting allusion to the workhouse, or the county gaol, old Ayliffe received in dignified silence. Not so, however, his son, who, rising with ominous calmness from the chair on which he had for some time been sitting, as it were on thorns, and silent only out of habitual deference to his father, approached Mr Oxley in two strides, seized him by the collar with the hand of a giant, and before his astonished father could interpose, had dragged Mr Oxley to the doorway, and, with a single jerk, flung him out into the open air with a violence which sent him staggering several yards, till he fell down at full length on the ground.

"Adam, Adam, what hast thou done?" commenced his father, approaching his son with an astounded air.

"Nay, never mind *me*, father," muttered his son vehemently, standing with arms a-kimbo, and watching Mr Oxley with eyes flashing fury. "There, Master Oxley; show never here again that wizened face of yours, or worse may happen. Away! Back to the Castle, and tell him that sent you here what you have received! Off! out into the road," he added, raising his voice, and striding towards Mr Oxley, who precipitately quitted the garden, "or I'll teach you to speak of the workhouse again! See that *the dogs lick not*"—

"Adam! I charge thee—hold thy peace!" said the old man, loudly and authoritatively, and advancing towards Mr Oxley; who, however, after muttering a few words, heard by the old man, and glancing furiously at young Ayliffe, hastily mounted his horse, which had been standing fastened at the gate, and was soon out of hearing. About that time, in the ensuing day, he had contrived, during an interview on business with the Earl, to intimate, as if casually only, that the Ayliffes, who owned the road-side cottage, had received the liberal overtures made by Mr Oxley on his lordship's behalf with expressions of coarse disrespect, and even malignant hostility. Not a word, however, said Mr Oxley of the violent treatment which he had received at the hands of young Ayliffe; nor did he deem it expedient, for reasons of his own, to summon his assailant to answer before the magistrates for what he had done. Would that the Earl of Milverstoke had received the slightest inkling of the occurrence of the day before,—of the spirit and temper in which Mr Oxley's negotiations, if such they could be called, had been carried on with the venerable yeoman. Such information, however, was of course not to be expected from Mr Oxley. Would, then, that it had occurred to Ayliffe or his son to go resolutely up to the Castle, insist on seeing its stern secluded lord, and apprise him of the insulting and oppressive line of conduct which had been pursued on his behalf. Mr Oxley, unless his denial had been believed, would have fled blighted from the presence of his lord, who would have told him in a voice of thunder to give an account of his stewardship, for that he might be no longer steward. But it fell not out so. Such a step was never dreamed of by either of the Ayliffes; who, on the contrary, rather anxiously awaited some vindictive movement on the part of Mr Oxley. He seemed, however, disposed to take no notice of what had happened; and the untoward occurrence appeared not likely to be followed by its apprehended consequences.

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Ayliffe received no more molestation from Mr Oxley, or any one else, with the view of compelling him to surrender the poor remnant of his little patrimonial estate. That gentleman probably thought it his wisest course, hoping that distress might effect what negotiation had failed in, to bide his time, as far as concerned the Earl's interests, with reference to gaining possession of Ayliffe's cottage and the slip of ground still remaining attached to it, and on which stood the small orchard and garden which have been already mentioned. All the rest poor old Ayliffe had been compelled to dispose of with reluctance and agony, during the troubled two years and a half, or three years, ensuing on his son's marriage. Like any slave in the plantations worked that son, from morning to night, with fond willingness, to support those who were so dear to him; and being also stimulated by an honourable ambition to preserve in his family the cherished spot where the parents from whom he sprung had been born, which, moreover, seemed infinitely enhanced to him in value, now that he had become himself a father—the father of yet another Adam Ayliffe, for so the child had been christened. But, alas! the poor thing gave no promise of its father's comeliness or strength, being, on the contrary, small and feeble from its birth, and likely to be reared, if at all, with difficulty. This little heir to misfortune and misery, however, had yet a further claim on the pity of every beholder; for, in the momentary absence of the woman intrusted with the care of it, on the occasion of her being suddenly summoned to the bedside of its apparently dying mother, the child fell from the chair on which it had been hastily and imprudently left, occasioning injuries, the effects of which would remain through life. This last occurrence grievously disturbed the equanimity of even old Ayliffe, and drove the more excitable temperament of his son almost to frenzy. When the poor mother, too, heard of what had happened—for how could it be concealed effectually?—it caused a relapse which nearly proved fatal. Here was wretchedness indeed! and wretchedness of which the sufferers saw no end! Had it not been for the teaching and example afforded by the father, young Ayliffe would have fallen into a gloomy irreligious humour, sullenly questioning the goodness and wisdom of Him without whose knowledge and permission this sad blow had not descended upon either parent or child. For a time, that which was unaccountable in this visitation of Providence seemed also unreasonable and unjust! To both his father and to Mr Hylton, young Ayliffe once morosely declared, that the spirit of a man could not bear flat injustice, *come from whom it might!* and asked—What had this poor child done?—what had its mother?—what had its father done to *deserve* such an infliction? "Questions these, Adam," said Mr Hylton kindly, but very gravely, "which millions upon millions of mankind have asked, in their own various troubles, who soon afterwards saw causes showing the wisdom and goodness which had permitted those troubles to happen, and vindicating the justice by which they had been ordained. Are you, Adam, the only one chastened by adverse visitations from God?" inquired Mr Hylton earnestly, his eyes filling with tears. "Look at him who now addresses you: why have my four children, whom I as dearly loved as ever you loved this poor babe, been taken from me, and after years of suffering, pain, and misery? why do they now lie mouldering into dust in yonder churchyard?"

Adam's lip quivered; his heart was softened; and his wife, in whose weak arms lay the injured infant, gently leaned down, and kissed its pale unconscious cheek, with emotions which none but a mother could feel. To her, and to her husband, their poor child became infinitely dearer from this its misfortune,—it was enshrined, as it were, in their very heart of hearts. Possibly, had it not suffered so severely, it might never have been loved so dearly.

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CHAPTER II.

The straits to which the Ayliffes were driven could not escape the notice of the kind-hearted inhabitants of the village, notwithstanding the stern reserve of the old man, and the somewhat angry and proud impatience of the son; who had rejected several friendly offers of assistance, with a morbid sensitiveness for which all considerate persons could make ample allowance. He would not, he said, live on charity, while he had health to work, and they could manage to keep their own freehold house over their heads. It was, however, very hard to sustain these proud feelings when he looked at his father, and his emaciated wife, and thought of her privations, borne with apparently a cheerful indifference, which quite vanished the instant that his back was turned. Many marks of substantial kindness were, with delicate consideration, forced upon them from the parsonage; and whatever came, indeed, from that hallowed quarter, young Ayliffe received with a kind of reverential gratitude. Mr Hylton had no income except that derived from his vicarage; and being very easy in the matter of his tithes, was sometimes not inconsiderably inconvenienced by the dilatoriness with which they were paid. Yet his charities, substantial and unostentatious, failed not; good Mrs Hylton, with her faithful housekeeper, made their cowslip, ginger, and elderberry wine, ever in due season; and many a bottle of it had been carried by Mr Hylton himself, on his visits to those who needed it. He kept but one cow, which went by the name of Every-one's-Cow; because, as soon as sufficient for the parsonage had been taken from what the good cow yielded at milking-time, the remainder was at the service of the poorer inhabitants of the village, who might always be seen trudging for this purpose, pitcher in hand, towards the parsonage, morning and evening.

Ayliffe had told Mr Hylton, but only in general terms, of the coarse and offensive treatment which he had experienced from Mr Oxley; and Mr Hylton was also thoroughly aware of the fond tenacity with which old Adam clung to the last link connecting him with the soil, which Mr Oxley would sever with such heartless and rude indifference. Mr Hylton's best sympathies, indeed, were with the old yeoman, whom he had from time to time, with cordial alacrity, assisted by loans of small sums of money, to enable him, as the phrase runs, "to keep his head above water" as long as possible. Mr Oxley was seen through and despised by Mr Hylton. The former perfectly well knew the estimation in which he was held by the latter; who, however, for the sake of parish peace, exhibited a constrained but perfectly disinterested civility towards one who was invested with so much authority as enabled him, when so disposed, to turn tyrant over those whom Mr Hylton loved—his poorer parishioners—with almost absolute impunity. He was not on such terms with Mr Oxley as would have warranted interference between him and the Ayliffes, even had there been any practical mode of doing so successfully. For, indeed, what was Mr Hylton to do? what could he prevent Mr Oxley from doing? The latter had planned an improvement in the Earl's property, to which the acquisition of Ayliffe's would be very conducive; and Mr

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Oxley had used every exertion which had occurred to him, to effect his purpose, in vain. He professed no intention, as he certainly had no power, to force Ayliffe to comply with his wishes; and, as the latter was fixedly resolved not to part with his last sad shred of interest in his native soil, till absolutely compelled to do so, Mr Hylton saw that, whatever might be his wish, and his opinion of Mr Oxley's character, he could not interfere between them for any practical purpose. He saw, alas! but too clearly, that the old man's grasp, however desperate, was very, very feeble, and could not be long maintained, unless some decisive and permanent change in his circumstances were to take place. The sad inhabitants of the cottage were aware of some efforts which Mr Hylton was making on behalf of the younger Ayliffe, for whom he was endeavouring to procure a permanent situation, as a resident schoolmaster, in a school conducted on a new plan, which Mr Hylton had been for some time anxious to establish at Milverstoke. With what tenacity did they cling to this solitary plank in the sea of sorrow in which they were buffeting! Yet were their hopes here doomed to be disappointed; since Mr Oxley, determined to defeat young Ayliffe, brought forward a person as candidate for the office, whom, therefore, there was no possibility of rejecting; for the Earl of Milverstoke had given the site for the school, and, through Mr Oxley, provided funds for the building of it, and promised to contribute largely to its support.

Baffled here, Mr Hylton bethought himself of a similar opening which was about to occur in an adjoining county; where, in the parish of a friend of his, a school was being erected on a much larger scale than that in Milverstoke, with a commensurate superiority of advantages to the person who might be so fortunate as to obtain the appointment of master. His move in this quarter, however, he did not communicate to the Ayliffes, lest he should excite hopes which might never be realised. His strenuously expressed opinion in favour of Ayliffe, his account of the family to which he belonged, and of the exemplary father by whom he had been brought up, and personal testimony to his qualifications for the office, were likely to have great weight with the persons with whom Mr Hylton was thus good-naturedly negotiating. He observed with pain the effects which long-continued anxiety were producing in young Ayliffe, on whose manly but harassed features he had not seen a smile, nor anything approaching to one, for many a long day. He had become silent and reserved; and Mr Hylton feared lest a tendency to moroseness should be established, such as it might be difficult to overcome; for he learnt from old Ayliffe that his son no longer seemed desirous of conversing with him, as formerly, on their circumstances; and when the old man read aloud the usual morning and evening chapter in the Bible, he could not but observe that his son lacked much of that serious and earnest attentiveness with which he had, from his youth up, joined in the family devotions. And an effort it appeared also to poor Mrs Ayliffe to do so; who, while holding her crippled child in her lap, would fix her eyes on the moody face of her husband, too well knowing, the while, how and whither his thoughts were wandering.

One night, as she told Mr Hylton with sobs and tears, her husband started up in bed, and, after sitting in silence for some time beside her, said,

"And all this, Sarah, has come upon us from the charitable deed my good father did do towards another, in giving security! Who can make me believe that that is just? Sarah, Sarah, this is very strange!"

This she mentioned also to old Ayliffe, who received it with stern expressions of sorrow.

"With me," said he, "my son will not now hold talk, nor scarcely listen to me, with the duty which he oweth to an old father, who hath ever striven to teach him aright! But, Sarah, be not thou guided by him herein. It is a spirit undevout and rebellious, and

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may be grievously chastised by God. I never said before, Sarah, Be not guided by thy husband—but now I do; for when he thus speaks, it is not he, but Satan through him; and God deliver my son and thy husband Adam from this peril to his soul!"

On the same day on which the old man thus rebuked the distrustfulness of his son, his own fortitude was not a little tried by an incident sadly indicative of his rapidly-failing circumstances. One by one had been parted with the chief articles of furniture which had for so many years made their little sitting-room a model of neatness and comfort—articles which had gone, with as much privacy as might be, by the carrier's cart, to be disposed of in the neighbouring market-town. With aching hearts the owners saw them removed, and with heavy misgivings received the petty produce of them. Still was there, however, in the corner, the clock which has already been mentioned; old-fashioned, and in a dark oaken case, curiously carved, and which had stood on the same spot, going *tick, tick*, with exemplary regularity, for more than half a century, but was that evening to cease performing its monitory functions in the cottage: having been sold by old Ayliffe, during the day, for three pounds, to a chandler living in the village, thriving, and just married, and who was presently coming to fetch away his purchase in his cart. The top of the clock had, during all the years which have been mentioned, formed the resting-place of the family Bible before spoken of; a large old-fashioned volume, with heavy brass clasps and corners, kept, by frequent handling, in constant brightness. Quaint and mysterious were the pictures illustrating the text of the Holy Volume; and by how many of the Ayliffe family, now dead and gone, had that volume been read, and hung over, with solemn and enchaining interest! Yet so carefully had it ever been preserved, that not a leaf was missing, or bore noticeable marks of injury. The spare leaves at the beginning and the end were covered with entries of a century's births, deaths, and marriages among the Ayliffes. There seemed scarcely room for above three or four more; yet one would soon be required, of another birth!—and, as old Ayliffe glanced at the abridged space remaining, he sadly wondered whether room would be found for a certain brief entry by-and-by, concerning himself!

It is impossible to deny that, as old Ayliffe sat by the dull red fire on the hearth, gazing at the old familiar face of the clock, knowing that he did so for the last time in his life, and that on the ensuing day that old clock would be standing, with its grave methodical *tick, tick*, amidst a new circle of faces at the chandler's, its new proprietor, he felt an inexpressible melancholy. Never would three pounds have been so precious as at that moment, presenting themselves to avert the coming spoliation! But it was not to be; the clock must go; and those whom it had so long served, so long guided and warned, must do without it. On that evening Ayliffe had read to his daughter-in-law the last chapter of Job, the preceding ones having been read regularly every evening, from the first chapter. Old Ayliffe, as had ever been his wont, read aloud the Bible; and methinks it was a subject for a keen-observing painter, to see the old man, and his son and daughter, in that their partially stripped cottage, awaiting its entire dismantling, nay, its transfer to strangers,—the first reading with grave energy, and the others earnestly listening to the sublime book of Job. Ayliffe's voice now and then trembled somewhat while reading passages exactly applicable to his own situation and circumstances; but, generally speaking, he discharged his duty with dignified composure and firmness, albeit with a certain rough and quaint simplicity. As he finished the last verse of the last chapter, and closed the book,—

"Ah, good father!" said Mrs Ayliffe, with a sigh, "how happy and grand Job must have been at the last! I wish that such things would happen

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to those who sorrowfully read his griefs and trials!"

Old Ayliffe remained silent for some time; and then said, looking at her with a grave reproving air,

"Sarah, didst thou notice that naught is said in this last chapter concerning Job's wife?"

"No, good father—but now I do," she replied—"And why is it?"

"There is a reason for it, Sarah; that thou mayest rely on. She perhaps was not let into her husband's prosperity and rejoicing,"—he looked at her keenly,—"because she had said to him in his trouble, when God's hand was heavy on him, *Curse God, and die.* And these things, Sarah, He forgetteth not."

His daughter-in-law raised her hand to her eyes, and submitted to the old man's kind and calm reproof in tearful silence; for she remembered a hasty expression of her own, in his presence, some day or two before, which, in spirit, had fallen not far short of the impious language of Job's wife. While they were thus talking, was heard the rumbling of approaching cart-wheels, on which Ayliffe rose and went to the door; and shading his eyes with his hand, as he looked up the road, saw that it was the chandler's cart coming for the clock. On this he returned rather suddenly, to await the moment of his friend's departure, gazing with a sort of fondness at the poor old clock's face: "Good-bye, good-bye," said he, within himself, "I do not willingly bid thee go; but go thou must: and how soon we must follow thee, and quit this, our little home, who can tell?" Now approached to the door the two men who had come for the clock, which they removed very carefully; Ayliffe scarcely opening his lips the while, but looking on in troubled silence. At length, the business being ended, the men bade him respectfully "Good evening;" the cart rattled heavily away; and Ayliffe gazed at the corner then standing vacant for the first time during half a century, with moist eyes and unutterable feelings.

How gloomily did all this herald in the approaching Christmas!

All hail, thou season of rightful, but solemn and elevating joy! Oh, what EVENT, gracious, stupendous, and awful, dost thou not commemorate? What but the mysterious, yet foretold advent of the Almighty Redeemer of mankind, the joy and glory of heaven and earth! In the wrapt contemplation, behold the very dust of earth become instinct with heavenly intelligence: even as the stars sang together for joy! Let a universal HOSANNAH fill the hearts and voices of mankind. For HE came! and was God with Us; dwelling in the flesh! With us! HERE! on this dim speck, amidst the bewildering and inconceivable vastness of the universe, singled out for such purpose in the unsearchable wisdom of the Most High! Angels unseen! bow with us, your present dust-clad brethren, your heads in awe profound! Together let us celebrate this Mystery, saying, "Glory to God in the highest; and on earth, PEACE, GOOD-WILL TOWARDS MEN!" Thus, heaven-kindled, is the joyousness of Christmas: soul-elevating: heart-opening. Therefore do all Christian people welcome this solemnly cheerful season; their hearts being first prostrate before God, and then expanding towards man, in deeds of charity and virtue.

But the coming of this hallowed season cannot, alas! banish gloom, poverty, and wretchedness—no, not even for one day—from among mankind. The great and the humble, the distinguished and the obscure, the rich and the poor, the gifted and the simple, may alike have their happy or their miserable Christmas! Be the season, therefore, approached with mingled fear and hope; and, when past, regarded with pious reflection, with cheerful submission, and reverential gratitude.

How bleak and blighting was to the Ayliffes the aspect of the coming Christmas! How different the feelings with which father and son regarded it! It is not to be denied that there was becoming evident a great

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difference between their views and feelings; those of the one tending towards a sullen intolerance of that adversity, which the other bore with faithful humility and resignation. During the week preceding, there had occurred between old Ayliffe and his son, their first serious dispute and misunderstanding; and it arose as follows. Anxiety and privation were doing their work conspicuously upon the health and appearance of Mrs Ayliffe, who was shortly expecting to become again a mother; and, judging from a former occasion, with what a prospect before her! The sight of her sweet but careworn face was to her husband agony insupportable; and it sent her good father-in-law often to his knees in private. The doctor who had attended her before was again engaged; and never left her without speaking of the necessity of nourishing food, which alone, he said, would go far to help her through her coming trouble. The son would listen to this with a quivering lip and a full heart; inwardly exclaiming, as the doctor spoke, "Nourishing food! Heaven help thee, dear Sarah, where is it to be got?" With these thoughts in his mind, burthening and depressing it, he went one day to his work at a farmer's at some distance from Milverstoke, having only one companion the whole day long; but that companion appearing good-natured and communicative, the frank young Ayliffe could not refrain from talking about that which was uppermost in his thoughts—the feeble condition of his wife, and her doctor's constant recommendation of nourishing food. "And why do not you get it, if you care for her?" inquired his companion with a surprised air, resting a moment from his work.

"Surely," quoth poor Ayliffe, "you should ask me why I do not get one of the stars out of the sky. Is meat to be picked up in the high-road?"

"No; not in the high-road," said the other, drily, "but there's dainty eating for the sick and the gentle to be had—elsewhere!"

In plain English, Ayliffe's new friend pointed at game; speaking most temptingly of hare, above all other sorts of game, as a dainty dish, whether roast or stewed, for those that were sick and delicate; and assured Ayliffe that his (the speaker's) wife had lived secretly on hare all through *her* time of trouble, and had never in her life thriven so well; for naught was so nourishing as hare's flesh. Poor Ayliffe listened to this, and much more, with but too willing an ear, though clean contrary to all his own notions, and those which he knew to be entertained by his father. He resisted but very faintly the arguments of his new friend; who, indeed, fairly staggered Ayliffe by asking him whether he thought that he did wrong if he caught a hedgehog, a weasel, or a snake in the field or hedge of another; and if not, why was it different with a hare? Much conversation had they of this sort; in the course of which poor Ayliffe, in the frank simplicity of his nature, gave such a moving picture of his wife's necessities, as seemed greatly to interest his companion; who said that in truth, and as luck would have it, he happened to have by him a very fine hare, which was greatly at Ayliffe's service. After much hesitation he, with many thanks, accepted the gift; and, accompanying his new friend to his cottage, at the close of their day's work received into his possession the promised hare (a finer one certainly was hardly to have been seen), and made his way homeward with his perilous present, under cover of the thickening shades of night. What dismal misgivings he had as he went along! How often he resolved either to return the hare to the giver, or fling it over the hedge as he passed! For he was aware of his danger: there being no part of England where game was more strictly preserved, more closely looked after, or poachers more severely punished than at Milverstoke. He thought, however, of his wife, and of the relish with which she must partake of this hare; and by the inspiriting aid of considerations such as these, he nerved himself to encounter her suspicions,

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and his father's rebuke. And to be sure, a sad scene ensued on his reaching home, where he found his father and wife anxiously awaiting his protracted arrival.

"Sarah," said he, as he entered, with a flustered air, "here is a present that I have for thee," and he placed before her what he had brought, scarcely daring to glance at his father; who, however, instantly took the alarm, demanding to know how, and when, and from whom he had gotten the hare that he had brought home. His son said that it was a gift, but refused to say who had given it to him. This startled his father still more; and more pressing he became to know how his son had obtained the hare.

"Adam! Adam!" said the old man, sternly, "thou hast gone very wrong in this matter, and thy face shows the trouble which it hath cost thee to do it! I will have none of this hare in my house. Strange doings are on foot truly; and of a sudden," he added, sighing, "is clean forgotten all that ever I have tried to teach!"

"Well, since it must be so," replied his son, somewhat doggedly, "let no more noise be made about this hare; but let it only be quietly eaten by Sarah there—and, it may be, I shall not bring another."

Mrs Ayliffe kissed her husband, and grasped her father-in-law's hand earnestly, but in vain, trying to pacify them. Old Ayliffe, however, was inexorable, and spoke far more sternly than either of them had ever heard him speak before; till, indeed, he had spurred his son's temper into unwonted heat and violence.

"I am tired, and so should we all be, of being beggars, and living on charity," said he, with a kind of fierceness.

"Better be beggar, Adam, than robber," replied his father, gravely.

"I am no robber!" said his son, with flushed cheek and flashing eye.

All this while the hare lay on the floor, in the midst of them, there being no light in the cottage except the low ruddy one proceeding from the peat fire. After gazing for some time with gloomy steadfastness at his son, old Ayliffe rose from his stool, took up the hare, and walked with it towards the door.

"Why, what art thou going to do, father, with that hare?" inquired his son amazedly.

"To bury it," replied the old man, sternly.

His son made no answer; and, without speaking even to his wife, strode out of the cottage, got into the high-road, and paced up and down it, walking to a considerable distance, in a state of unprecedented agitation and anger. At length, however, he returned somewhat calmed; and finding his father and his wife sitting up awaiting his return, and cowering chillily over the nearly extinct fire, his heart suddenly softened at the sight of them, and he could not return their fond greeting for emotion.

"Come, Adam, my dear son!" quoth the old man, grasping him affectionately by the hand, "mischief thou didst not intend, I verily believe; but mischief and wrong hast thou done nevertheless. But now are we friends: and get thee to bed, and vex me thus no more, dear Adam! Meddle not again with game, which in these times is verily like hell-fire, the least touch of which burns terribly. That hare haunts me, though I have put it away, Adam. Nay—it much misgives me that we have not heard the last of yon poor hare, buried though she be!"

"Listen, dear Adam, to this," said his wife, throwing her arms round her husband's neck; "never, though I die of hunger, will I touch game which I know not how thou didst come by—nay, I will not, Adam, lest we get into trouble, and do anger God!"

These last words made her husband glance suddenly towards her as if he would have spoken; but he restrained himself, and they retired to their little room.

Poor old Ayliffe's words overnight were prophetic. Scarcely had they sat down to their scanty breakfast, the next morning, when two constables entered the cottage, with a warrant against young Ayliffe for poaching, as they said. The truth was, that

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he had been miserably entrapped into accepting the hare as a gift, by one who, having sent a companion to watch him home with it, went immediately to inform against him, in order to get half the penalty, if any were awarded, as prescribed by the statute; and who should be at the justice's, on some matter of business, when the warrant was applied for, but Mr Oxley, who quickly saw what a lever this occurrence afforded him, wherewith to force the Ayliffes into surrendering their cottage, and so allowing the long-sought improvements in the Earl's estate to be at once effectuated. The prisoner at first was about to resist, infuriated by a faint shriek of his wife, who fell senseless into the arms of the agitated old Ayliffe; and had the young man resisted, his prodigious strength would, in spite of the staves of the constables, have made him their match: and who could have answered for the result? But a miserable groan from his father, accompanying the words, "Go, dear lad! go: and I'll follow thee presently!" brought him to his senses; and he peaceably, but despairingly, accompanied the officers. The only words which he uttered to them were a request not to go through the village, and they complied.

The matter would soon have been settled at the justice's, before whom the case was proved in a trice: Ayliffe confessing that he had had the hare in his possession (such being the offence with which he stood charged), and honestly telling what had passed between him and his old father on the subject. The punishment was a penalty of five pounds, or three months' imprisonment in the house of correction.

"Nay, but I have not five farthings," said Ayliffe, desperately; "and if I be sent to prison, it will go hard with my poor wife—that's all!"

The magistrate, Sir Henry Harrington, looked at him kindly; and after a pause, read him a serious lecture on the consequences of listening to bad advice, and the heinous nature of an offence against the game laws, which, his Worship said, were the only things that prevented the country from becoming barbarous; on which account the law was properly very strict—but, alas! not half strict enough to put down the enormous vice of poaching.

While this and much more was being said, some one, at the instance of Mr Oxley, who dared not be seen in the matter by the prisoner, offered to pay the penalty of five pounds, if his father would promise to sell his cottage to the Earl of Milverstoke.

"No! I'll rot in jail first!" said young Ayliffe, fiercely. "Mayhap I now see how I got here!" This he said with a strange expression of countenance.

At this moment arrived Mr Hylton, accompanied by old Ayliffe; who, on his son's being taken from the cottage, had gone to the vicarage, and told everything that had happened: and, by his artlessness and misery, so moved Mr Hylton's feelings, that he took five pounds with him, and borrowing a gig from the surveyor in the village, drove off in it, accompanied by old Ayliffe, and arrived at the magistrate's just in time to save poor young Ayliffe from being committed to prison for three months, as a rogue and vagabond! according to the statute.

"I have reason to believe," said Mr Hylton to his brother magistrate, "that this poor soul hath fallen into a trap set for him, and hath done it ignorantly, and from mere love of a sick wife; wherefore I will pay the penalty for him."

At this young Ayliffe could not restrain himself, but turned his head away, and wept bitterly.

"I wish," said Sir Henry, with some emotion, "that it were fitting for me to join in paying this fine, or that I could remit it: but my duty, as Mr Hylton can testify, is, under the statute, imperative."

So this sad affair ended. Mr Hylton sternly desired young Ayliffe to be in attendance at the parsonage, at nine o'clock on the next morning; and then drove home the elder Ayliffe, who could scarce speak for sorrow.

"These five pounds, Adam," said Mr Hylton, "are not a light matter to

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me, for I cannot get in my tithes without great trouble, and neither of you will be able, I fear, ever to repay it me: that, however, I ask not, but freely forgive your son, whom I will, with God's blessing, read a lesson in the morning that he shall not forget."

With this they alighted at the parsonage, where old Ayliffe was obliged to swallow a little refreshment; and then he made his way to his desolate cottage, where he was some two hours afterwards joined by his son, wearied with a fourteen miles' walk (for the Justice's was seven miles off), and the agitation and mortification of the day. No reproaches had he to encounter from his father, whom he found on his knees, in his bedroom, with his hands clasped over his heart!

By nine o'clock on the ensuing morning, poor young Ayliffe was standing in the little library of Mr Hylton, who was greatly moved when he saw the woe-struck but manly face of the culprit.

"Come, come, I am not going to make a mighty business of this, Adam," said Mr Hylton, after compelling him to sit down, "because I see that you feel deeply the wrong that you have done. You knew better, Adam, and terribly forgot yourself;—and see the consequences! Your father never had to bow his good head with shame before yesterday, and then through no fault of his: and your wife, I daresay, has suffered not a little on this account."

Ayliffe's lip quivered, and presently his tears could not be any longer forced back.

"How is she, Adam, this morning?" said Mr Hylton, gently, observing his emotion.

After a few moments' pause, Ayliffe faltered, "Terribly ill, sir!"

"I was afraid that it might be so; but we must look after her: and indeed Mrs Hylton is, I hope, by this time there, with some small matters suitable for your poor wife's situation."

"Sir—sir!" said Ayliffe, with sudden vehemence, after long struggling against emotions which seemed likely to choke him, "you are killing me: I cannot bear it! You are too good, and I must go away! I cannot look you in the face, sir!—I'm quite heart-broken, sir!"

"Give me your hand, Adam," said Mr Hylton, heartily, rising and approaching him. "You are restored to my good opinion: great allowances were to be made for you; and I believe that you acted from naught but love to a suffering wife. And now," he continued, opening a drawer, and taking out a letter, "see how nearly you have seriously injured yourself—and yet what a prospect there is of better days for you! Here have I been doing all that I could to get you made the master of a school in the next county, and this letter tells me that I was on the point of succeeding; when, behold! you are suddenly a convicted poacher! I have miserable fears that you have undone all; but hope that what passed yesterday has not yet been carried into the next county. I am going to the rector, who is an old friend of mine, to tell him the true state of the case, and what great allowances ought to be made for you. He is a very feeling gentleman, and I may prevail on him to give you the place, that I have so long striven to get for you; but it must be only by-and-by, when this matter may be somewhat blown over. I have to prepare for my Sunday duty, and it is inconvenient for me to leave home: yet this thing is so urgent, and so much for your good, that I am going to ride over this very day—nay, my horse and saddlebags are even now being got in readiness."

It is in vain to attempt describing the feelings of mingled gratitude, fear, hope, and vexation with which all this was listened to by young Ayliffe.

"You know that I am dealing kindly by you," continued Mr Hylton; "and now make me, and keep when you make it, a promise—that you will never, knowingly, speak again to a poacher, or receive game from him, or by means of him; nor let any unlawfully come into your hands or your house."

"As I am a true man, sir, for all

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that's just happened, I never will, sir; even though we be all starving!" replied Ayliffe, with energy.

"God will not permit you to starve, Adam, depend upon it: you shall not, at least, while we live at the parsonage; so now, my poor friend, go back home, and comfort your wife and father as well as you may. I have a long day's ride before me."

So they parted. About ten minutes afterwards, Ayliffe, trudging homeward, was overtaken by Mr Hylton on horseback, in travelling trim, having thus made good his word, and being already on his errand of goodness.

"God bless thee, Adam!" said he, as he passed smartly along.

"God Almighty bless you, sir!—and thank you!" faltered Ayliffe, almost inaudibly, taking off his hat, and gazing bareheaded after his benefactor till he was hid from his sight.

How little either of those two thought, at that moment, of what was ordained to happen before they met again!

When Ayliffe reached the cottage, he found that Mrs Hylton had not long before quitted it, having spent half an hour by his wife's bed-side, and left with her two bottles of cowslip, and one of port wine, together with some rice, tea, sugar, two rabbits, and nearly a quarter of a cheese, all of which had been eagerly carried by the housekeeper who accompanied her, and who had known poor Mrs Ayliffe, as has been seen, in her happier days at the parsonage. When Ayliffe had been made aware of the visit of his gentle benefactress, he stood gazing in tearful silence at the prints of her slender feet, in the snow, homeward; and his heart was so full that he could have fallen down and kissed them, as traces of an angel's visit.

The next morning he presented himself, as usual, to his employers; who, however, rejected his services, having heard of the atrocity of which he had just been convicted, and being, moreover, directly under the influence of Mr Oxley, from whose noble master had been purloined the hare which lay buried behind the cottage: having attained thereby a distinction possibly never conferred upon hare before.

Three days elapsed before Mr Hylton returned; and when he did, it was with a sad and averted countenance that he passed the cottage, at a quick pace: for his friend had, not unreasonably, deemed the conviction for poaching to be an insuperable obstacle in the way of receiving Ayliffe as the master of the newly-established school. Still the resolute kindness of Mr Hylton led him to persevere, though with faint hopes; and he determined to get up, if possible, a testimonial to poor young Ayliffe's irreproachable character from the leading people in the village. On the Sunday, Mr Hylton observed that he was absent from church, and sent the clerk, at the close of the service, to old Ayliffe, who was in his usual place, but with a very dejected look, desiring him to attend for a moment in the vestry. When he appeared, Mr Hylton shook him warmly by the hand, told him of the disappointment which he had experienced, and seemed much affected when the old man explained to him that it was pure shame only that had kept his son from church, seeing that all present would have had their eyes on him. Mr Hylton also heard with anxiety that the young man had continued in a very moody humour, and had let fall—as he had supposed, unnoticed by his father—certain expressions which had somewhat disquieted him; for they were of an unforgiving tendency.

"Talk you to him, Ayliffe, faithfully," said Mr Hylton, "and in a day or two's time I will come and speak to him. But I wish first to see whether I may yet be able to bring you cheering news about the school."

And Ayliffe did talk to his son, often and seriously; and so were they engaged, on the evening but one before Christmas, when a low rumbling sound, coming from the direction of the high-road, which, as has been already explained, ran at only a little distance

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from the front of the cottage, caused both of them to walk towards the door; where they stood, just as a coroneted travelling carriage and four, followed by two others, turned the corner, being those of Lord Alkmond, the only son and heir of the Earl of Milverstoke, and some friends coming down to the Castle for the Christmas holidays.

"Stay, Adam, and pay respect to the young lord," quoth the old man to his son, preparing to uncover. "Honour to whom honour is due!"

"No—I will not, if even thou, mine own father, went on thy knees," said his son sternly, walking inward; while old Ayliffe, standing rigidly erect in the doorway, respectfully took off his broad hat, exhibiting as fine a bald head, fringed with silvery hair, as ever had been uncovered to the young lord; who, catching sight of him, returned the courtesy in a hasty military fashion (for he was an officer in the Guards) as they dashed past. He knew no more than the beautiful boy whom he was at the moment fondling, or the lovely lady who sate beside him, of the injurious and offensive proceedings of Mr Oxley towards the owner of that cottage.

"There will be rare doings, by-and-by, at the Castle, I warrant me," said the old man, retiring into the cottage. "They be like to make a merry Christmas on't!"—and he sighed.

CHAPTER III.

Milverstoke Castle was a magnificent structure, worthy of its superb situation, which was on the slope of a forest, stretching down to the sea-shore. Seen from the sea, especially by moonlight, it had an imposing and picturesque aspect; but from no part of the surrounding land was it visible at all, owing to the great extent of woodland in which it was embosomed. The Earl of Milverstoke, then lord of that stately residence, had a personal appearance and bearing which might be imagined somewhat in unison with its leading characteristics. He was tall and thin, and of erect figure; his countenance was refined and intellectual, though of a stern expression; and his features were comely: his hair had been for some years changed from jet-black into iron-grey. His bearing was lofty, sometimes even to repulsiveness; his manner was frigid; his temper and spirit were haughty and self-reliant. Opposition to his will, equally in great or small things, rendered that arbitrary will inflexible, whatever might be the consequence or sacrifice; for he gave himself credit for never acting from impulse, but always from discretion and deliberation. He was a man of powerful intellect, extensive knowledge, and high principle—and, so far, admirably fitted for public affairs; in which, indeed, he had borne a conspicuous part, till his imperious and exacting temper rendered him intolerable to his colleagues, and objectionable even to his sovereign: from whose service he had *retired* (to use a courteous word), in disdainful disgust, some five years before being presented to the reader. He possessed a vast fortune, and two or three princely residences in various parts of the kingdom. Of these, Milverstoke was the principal; and its stern solitude suiting his gloomy humour, he had betaken himself to it on quitting public life. He had been a widower for many years, and, since becoming such, had been alienated from the distinguished family of his late Countess, whose ardent

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and sensitive disposition they believed to have been utterly crushed by the iron despotism of an unfeeling and domineering husband. Whatever foundation there might have been for this supposition, its effects contributed to embitter the feelings of the Earl, and strengthen a tendency to misanthropy. Still his character had fine features. He was most munificent; the very soul of honour; a perfect gentleman; and of irreproachable morals. He professed a firm belief in Christianity, and was exemplary in the discharge of what he conceived to be the duties which it imposed upon him. He would listen to the inculcation of the Christian virtues of humility, gentleness, and forgiveness of injury, with a kind of stern complacency,—unaware, all the while, that they no more existed within himself than fire within the sculptured marble. Most of his day-time he spent in his library, or in solitary drives, or walks along the sea-shore, or in the woods. Unfortunately he took no personal part, nor felt any particular interest, in the management of his large revenues and extensive private affairs; trusting them, as has been already intimated, implicitly to others. When he rode through the village, which lay sheltered near the confines of the woodland in which his castle was situated, he appeared to have no interest in it or its inhabitants, though nearly all of them were his own tenantry. His agent, Mr Oxley, was their real master.

Mr Hylton was one of his lordship's occasional chaplains, but by no means on intimate terms with him; for that, the vicar's firm independent character unfitting him. While he acknowledged the commanding talents of the Earl, his lordship was, on his part, fully aware of Mr Hylton's strong intellect, and the pure and lofty spirit in which he devoted himself to his spiritual duties. The good vicar of Milverstoke knew not what was meant by the fear of man, as his stately parishioner had had many opportunities of observing; and, in short, Mr Hylton was a much less frequent visitor at the castle than might have been supposed, and was warranted by his position and proximity.

Some of the Earl's frigid reserve towards him was possibly occasioned by the cordial terms of intimacy which had existed between him and the late Countess;—a lovely and exemplary personage, who, living in comparative retirement at Milverstoke, while her lord was immersed in political life, had consulted Mr Hylton constantly on the early education of her two children. The Earl had married late in life, being nearly twenty years older than his Countess, who had brought him one son and one daughter. The former partook largely of his father's character, but in a somewhat mitigated form; he was quicker in taking offence than the Earl, but had not his implacability. If he should succeed to the paternal titles and estates, he would be the first instance of such direct succession for nine generations; the Earl himself having been the third son of a second son. The family was of high antiquity, and its Saxon and Norman blood had several times intermingled with that of royalty.

His daughter, Lady Emily Amaranthe, was, when presented to the reader, nearly entering on her eighteenth year, and promised to be, as had been her mother, one of the most beautiful women in England. In her were the lofty spirit of her father, and the gentle virtues of her mother, blended in such a manner as to be gradually investing her with considerable influence over her stern surviving parent: for that occasional firmness secretly pleased him in a beautiful girl, which, in one of his own sex, would have served only to call into action an overmastering manifestation of the same quality.

On his son, the Lord Viscount Alkmond, all the Earl's hopes and anxieties were centred: he had been watched with exquisite solicitude from his birth. He was, as has been already said, an officer in the army; and had been for but a short time married to a very lovely person, the heiress and representative of a family of the highest

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distinction; and, to the Earl's unutterable delight, she had brought her lord a son and heir, within a year after their marriage.

Lord Alkmond's spirits had never been buoyant; but he had returned from his Continental tour with a perceptible gloom of manner, for which he assigned no reason: even his marriage had only temporarily relieved his depression of spirits; and the return of it occasioned both his wife and father considerable anxiety. Fond as was the Earl of his son, it is strangely true that he had never quite made a friend of that son; the cause lying in a peculiar temperament of both, unfavourable to the growth of affectionate confidence. They had had but one serious misunderstanding, however, in their lives, and that had occurred about a year before their being presented to the reader—when Lord Alkmond astounded even his wealthy and munificent father, by asking for a very large sum of money, at the same time refusing even to answer any question concerning the destination of it. His manner somewhat alarmed, but more irritated and offended the Earl, who peremptorily refused to comply with what he deemed a monstrously unreasonable request on the part of his son; and there had ever since existed a certain uneasy feeling between them, which did not, however, perceptibly affect their demeanour before strangers. The Earl was haunted by the suspicion of a *post-obit* bond; but, from a variety of considerations, never deigned to ask his son a question on the subject.

There were, indeed, as old Ayliffe had supposed, grand rejoicings at the Castle that Christmas, to celebrate the first anniversary of the birthday of the future heir to the Castle; and many distinguished visitors had been invited, whose equipages had thundered at intervals past old Ayliffe's cottage, for a day or two before that on which Lord Alkmond had passed it; he having been detained in town by military business, rendered necessary by his having obtained a somewhat extended leave of absence.

The rejoicings were not to be confined to the brilliant circle assembled at the Castle. An order had gone forth for corresponding festivities and holiday-making among the villagers and the surrounding tenantry; for all of which Lord Milverstoke had most bountifully provided, after the usual fashion of old English hospitality, on a grand scale. His frigid courtesy was, on that occasion, melted into cheerful cordiality. Except during a brief tenure of high office, and of great political power, his ambitious and craving soul had never appeared so nearly satisfied. The domestics of the Castle reaped a rich harvest; the pecuniary remembrances of the season being doubled, from the highest to the lowest, by the Earl's express direction. Alas! even the sum paid to the humblest helper in the stables, would have provided a repast on Christmas-day for all the melancholy occupants of the cottage; but no one in that magnificent structure ever thought of *them*. Had it not been, indeed, for the kindness of Mr Hylton, who had forwarded to them some little contribution towards a Christmas dinner, scarcely more than a nominal one would have been theirs! Cheerless and disconsolate though Christmas threatened thus to be with old Ayliffe, as far as this world's hopes and happiness were concerned, he rose very early in the morning of that Christmas day; while even yet the stars were glittering brightly in the cold clear sky, and all was solemn silence. As he gazed upwards into the heavens, he bethought him of the sublime and mystic STAR of Bethlehem. What pure and elevating thoughts were his, whose spirit dropped for a while the fetters of earth, while mounting into heavenly contemplation! He was the only one from the cottage who made his appearance at church that day; and the vigilant eye of Mr Hylton could scarcely detect his distant figure, lost as it was in the novel crowd of gentle and simple, from the Castle, that occupied the church. When the old man returned home, he found his son

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and daughter far more despondent even than he had left them. The former seemed scarcely capable of speaking in answer to either his wife or father; who attributed the main cause of his depression and taciturnity to grief at losing the situation which Mr Hylton had been striving to obtain for him. All three of them now gave it up in despair; but none of them knew of another effort on the behalf of young Ayliffe, which had been made by the indefatigable Mr Hylton, on his visit to his friend, and which effort was likely to be successful — viz. to obtain for him the situation, then vacant, of bailiff to a wealthy squire, related to the clergyman who had so reasonably demurred to appointing young Ayliffe to the mastership of the school. Here Mr Hylton was very sanguine; and he had good grounds for expecting, within a few days' time, to be able to announce to that unhappy little family, an event which would be really, to them all, like life from the dead. Only one visitor had the Ayliffes on that dreary Christmas-day, and it was good Mr Hylton, who went to them after the morning service. The snow lay nearly a foot deep, and continued to flutter down thickly, threatening to do so for hours. He carried with him a bottle of port wine, which he gave to them with a solemn and hearty benediction; at the same time placing a five-shilling piece in the trembling hand of Mrs Ayliffe, as a Christmas-box for the little Adam. There was not much fire on the hearth, and they were just concluding the meal for which they had been indebted to Mr Hylton, as he entered. They all looked so sad—even old Ayliffe—that Mr Hylton longed to announce the strong hopes which he entertained that better days were in store for them; but, after balancing the matter for some little time in his mind, a humane prudence prevailed, and he left them to return to his own Christmas fireside; partaking of the homely comforts there awaiting him, with a sense of quiet enjoyment, which was somewhat dashed, however, by a recollection of the cheerless scene which he had so shortly before quitted. The first glass of wine which he took after dinner, accompanied the following expression of his benevolent feelings: "May God Almighty bless all mankind, and confer upon the virtuous poor His choicest blessings. Let us drink to the health of all my parishioners, peer and peasant, in castle and cottage: all this day duly remembering, WHO it was that lay in the manger, and WHY! And may God bless thee, my Mary," said he, embracing his wife; "and thee, thou last lamb of our flock," he added, tenderly folding his little child in his arms, and kissing her, as did the mother, in silence. Their hearts were full; and their eyes unconsciously glanced at several chairs ranged at the further end of the room, which had no longer any stated occupants. Presently, however, they got into a more cheerful vein, which was interrupted, though for a moment only, when, in talking over their neighbours and parishioners, and the events of the past year, they spoke of the unfortunate Ayliffes.

"How full the church was, to-day, dear Henry!" exclaimed Mrs Hylton.

"Ay, it was," he replied, somewhat complacently. "It seemed to me as if there were a sea of strange faces, and most of them, too, with a sort of town look about them. There were one or two of the great ones of the earth there, Mary, I can tell you! Who would have thought of the King's prime minister being one of Parson Hylton's Christmas congregation! And I can tell you, too, that he listened to my sermon very attentively: and by the way, I must say, there were in it one or two things which it might do his Grace no harm to remember."

"He has a fine commanding face, Henry, has he not?"

"Polly, Polly," said Mr Hylton, chucking her under the chin, and smiling good-naturedly, "I fancy you would say as much of any prime minister: you would say it—ay, of me, were I he."

"Well, and, dear love, I might say as much, and yet tell no fib," said she, affectionately.

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"Pho!" he replied, laughingly, and kissed the dear cheek which he still thought pretty; and which, in expression, was lovely indeed.

Good Mrs Hylton was not far wrong. Her husband's features were still handsome, plainly stamped with the impress of thought, and, as it were, radiant with benignity. You would have said also, on looking at them, that their owner had seen his share of troubles.

"The most striking figure in the Earl's pew," said Mr Hylton, "crowded though it was with those whose names are so often heard of, was, in my opinion, my Lord Milverstoke himself."

"Yes, he truly had a stately appearance—that I myself noticed: but he is so stern and distant in his bearing—one feels, dearest, no *interest* in him."

"Ay, that is so, doubtless; 'tis a pity he is of so imperious a temper. He has a heart, which is in its proper place, but, as it were, imbedded in ice, which you have to cut through before you can get at it. He is one of the most powerful intellects that we have; and yet"—

"How like him young Lord Alkmond is—only handsomer!"

"Not handsomer than his father was, when he was his son's age, I can tell you, Mary. But did you notice how charming looked dear Lady Emily? Mark my words, Mary; she will in a year or two shine at court a star of the first magnitude!"

"I hope they won't spoil the dear girl: she is one of a disposition simple, and noble, and quite perfect."

"*Perfect*, my dear, is a huge word; but 'tis Christmas, and we won't quarrel about *words*. Lady Emily is a fine creature; but, when she chooses, she can be as stately as her lofty papa."

"She is growing very like the Countess, Henry, is she not?" said Mrs Hylton with a sigh.

"So I thought to-day."

"By the way, I wonder whether we shall be asked to dinner at the Castle this week!—If *she* have her way we go—that I am sure of," said Mrs Hylton, resolutely.

And she proved not mistaken; for the next day Lady Emily called at the parsonage, as she drove by, and delivered a very cordial invitation from the Earl for dinner on the day after, and the Earl's coach was to come down for them, as it did whenever both Mr and Mrs Hylton dined at the Castle. Their high expectations were exceeded by the splendid scene which they encountered on that occasion. The Castle had never, in fact, during twenty years, witnessed such festivity as during those Christmas holidays. In returning home, both remarked the buoyant spirits of the Earl of Milverstoke, and the exquisite courtesy of his manners. While good Mrs Hylton had occupied herself chiefly with Lady Emily, and Lady Alkmond and her beautiful boy, Mr Hylton had been watching with anxious interest the Earl and Lord Alkmond; observing in the latter manifestly forced spirits, especially when he was brought into contact with his father, whose full piercing eye Mr Hylton occasionally observed directed towards his son, with what appeared an expression of rapid but uneasy scrutiny.

On one of the more advanced days of the Christmas week, there was to be a kind of military banquet at the Castle, in compliment to the officers of a dragoon regiment, one of whose outquarters was at the barracks, at some two miles' distance, their headquarters being in an adjoining county. Every officer, either in that regiment or any other, was invited, if within reach; for an affair of that kind was not an everyday occurrence. Every evening had the band from the barracks been placed at the disposal of the Earl, for the entertainment of his guests; and charming, indeed, was the effect produced, when, the weather admitting, the mellow music echoed through the woods.

On the occasion last mentioned, Mr Hylton happened to be returning home from paying a visit to a sick parishioner. His walk lay for upwards of a mile along the outskirts of the wood.

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It was about ten o'clock, and the night calm, but gloomy. With what ravishing sweetness came fitfully towards him the sounds of bugles and French horns! He often stood still to listen; and, while thus engaged, heard the report of a musket, evidently fired in the wood. The sound was quickly repeated. "Oh, ho!" thought he, as he resumed his walk homeward, "the rogues think that they have found an opportunity!" He was somewhat surprised, a few moments afterwards, at the music abruptly ceasing, in the midst of a well-known national air; and, unless his ear deceived him, he heard the faint sound of human voices, but evidently at a considerable distance. His experience as a magistrate suggested to him a probable solution of what he had heard, viz. a collision between poachers and the keepers. Just as he had reached the parsonage-gate, a horseman came galloping up the road which he had just quitted, and which led on to the park-gates of the Castle. A moment afterwards a dragoon in undress uniform thundered past him at top speed. "What's the matter?" hastily called out Mr Hylton, but received no answer. The soldier had either heeded or heard not, and was quickly out of sight. Scarcely five minutes had elapsed before other similar sounds from the same quarter brought Mr Hylton suddenly out of the parsonage down to the gate, when he saw a groom coming along at full gallop.

"Stay, stay a moment! What has happened?" called out Mr Hylton, loudly.

The man did not slacken his pace, but, as he passed, shouted hoarsely, and evidently in desperate agitation, "Oh! murder, murder!"

And, indeed, an astounding and horrifying event had just occurred. How shall it be written? Lord Alkmond had been MURDERED in the wood! And at the moment of Mr Hylton's asking the question, the bleeding body of the young peer was being carried into the Castle by two dragoons, who almost trembled under their lifeless burthen. By the time that Mr Hylton, greatly agitated, had got into the village, all its startled inhabitants were at their doors, or standing in groups in the street, conversing so intently together that they scarcely observed a troop of dragoons, fully armed, galloping past them towards the park-gate of the Castle. Within a few minutes afterwards a portion of them returned faster than they had gone, following a person in plain clothes, who appeared to be leading the way for them. Woeful to relate, their errand was to Ayliffe's cottage, which they reached a few moments after young Ayliffe had sprung into it, nearly striking down the door as he entered, reeking with perspiration, with horror in his face, breathing like a hard-run horse, and with glaring blood-stains on one of his arms. His father, who was sitting beside a small candle reading the Bible, shrunk from him, aghast and speechless; and young Ayliffe was uttering some incoherent sounds in answer to his astounded father's inquiries, when the clattering of horses' hoofs was heard; and the next moment four dragoons, carbine in hand, entered the cottage, while others remained outside, around the door, with swords drawn.

"What do ye want with me?" at length gasped young Ayliffe, staring with haggard countenance at the soldiers.

"Dost thou surrender to us, who demand it in the King's name?" said one of them—the sergeant.

Young Ayliffe started up from the bench on which he had thrown himself, and, with a desperate effort, said, "Where is your authority to take me? This is my father's house!"

"Raise thou but a finger to resist us, and we fire!" said the sergeant, and the three dragoons who were with him lowered their carbines.

"What do you arrest me for?" inquired Ayliffe, hoarsely.

"When we have got thee in safe keeping, according to orders, thou shalt know," quoth the sergeant.

At this moment Ayliffe's eye lit upon the blood on his sleeve, and he gave a frightful start. "I know nought of

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it!—I am innocent—God be my witness!" he gasped, looking imploringly at the soldiers.

At that moment was heard the sound of rapidly approaching horse-feet; and presently a constable entered with his staff, and, approaching, said—"Adam Ayliffe, I arrest thee for the murder of Lord Alkmond in the wood just now!" on which a loud groan issued from poor old Ayliffe, who had been listening in speechless consternation, and then he fell senseless on the ground. In the sudden agitation and horror of the scene, had not been noticed a female head thrust hastily through the half-opened door, shortly after young Ayliffe had rushed into the house, as has been described; nor had any one observed or heard, a moment or two afterwards, a dull sound as of one falling; but the miserable Mrs Ayliffe—for in truth she it was—had sunk on the floor of her room in a swoon, in which she continued up to the entrance of the constable. "Sally!—Sarah!—Where art thou?" shouted young Ayliffe, wildly, making a motion towards the door; but the constable proceeded to put handcuffs on him.

"If thou stir a foot till these be on," said the sergeant, coolly, "thou wilt have lead in thee:" on which Ayliffe, with a bewildered stare, yielded himself, apparently palsied, to his captors, and shortly afterwards suffered himself to be led from the room, and assisted on the horse of one of the dismounted dragoons, who first withdrew the pistols from the holster. The others instantly mounted, leaving him whose horse was ridden by Ayliffe in the cottage, to attend on old Ayliffe, who seemed in a fit; and within half an hour afterwards, the horror-stricken and half-stunned Ayliffe was safely lodged in the cage near the village: the troop which had escorted him remaining on guard around it, till relieved by orders from the barracks. An excited crowd of villagers soon gathered around the cage, but was kept at a distance by the dragoons, who would not allow even Mr Hylton to approach it, though he came up to them, greatly agitated, demanding admission as a magistrate. His right, however, was not recognised by the soldiers, who also listened with frigid indifference to the loud murmurs of the crowd around, expressing indignation at Mr Hylton's repulse. "Where did you take Adam Ayliffe—your prisoner?" he inquired, but received no answer. One of the officers who had been dining at the Castle in company with the late Lord Alkmond, rode up immediately afterwards.

"Is your prisoner secured?" said he.

"Yes, sir; handcuffed."

"Did he resist?"

"No, sir."

"Who is he?"

"Don't know, sir."

The officer cast a glance of hasty but effectual scrutiny at the cage. He saw that it looked old, and was not over-strongly constructed. "No one," he whispered, "is to approach this place nearer than you; and I will send down some irons from the barracks immediately. Let him remain till further orders;" and with this the officer was galloping off, when a loud howl was heard from within the cage, curdling the very blood of the bystanders. "Open the door," said the officer, turning round his horse and dismounting.

Two soldiers thereupon alighted, and stood, sword in hand, by their officer. "Stand back!" said he, calmly. The door was opened, and the sergeant, holding up the lantern in the doorway, disclosed the figure of apparently a maniac, striking his forehead violently with the handcuffs.

"Be quiet, sir, or you will be placed in irons," said the officer, sternly.

Ayliffe gnashed his teeth, and his bloodshot eyes glared fearfully at the officer; who having whispered a word or two in the ear of one of the men, on which the door was closed and locked, rode off at full gallop. Within half an hour's time the unfortunate prisoner was in irons, which had been sent down from the barracks. Mr Hylton's benevolent heart dictated another errand to him: on being repulsed from the cage, he had returned to the parsonage ordered out his horse and rid-

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den off to the cottage. Oh, what a scene he encountered! The soldier who had been left there was, with a kind air, giving some water to the old man, who sat on the floor, propped up against the wall, apparently in a stupor. Beside him lay huddled up, near the fireplace, the poor child of the prisoner, still sobbing, but having cried itself to sleep. A woman, whom the soldier had fetched from a neighbouring cottage, was in Mr Ayliffe's room; and on Mr Hylton entering, came out in weeping agitation, saying, "Poor soul! I believe, sir, she is dead, and yet in labour!"

"Oh, poor Mrs Ayliffe! Oh, poor Mrs Ayliffe! What is to be done?" quoth Mr Hylton; "I will go for the doctor;" and, as fast as his horse could carry him, he went.

Who shall describe the scene going on at the Castle in consequence of this awful event? It seemed as though a thunderbolt had fallen upon them from heaven. All was petrifying consternation and bewilderment. At the moment when the bleeding corpse of the young Lord was being carried towards the Castle, Lady Alkmond was gracefully dancing a minuet. The ball-room presented a gay and splendid aspect. Many officers were there; the costume of the ladies was exceedingly beautiful; and the loveliest of the figures that wore it was the young Lady Emily, who that evening was making her first appearance in public. The Earl of Milverstoke had never appeared before to such great advantage: having dropped almost all his stern stateliness, he was a model of courtly ease and affability. Even the Duke of Bradenham, formerly one of his colleagues in the Cabinet, was eyeing him with great interest, wondering how mollifying an effect had been produced, by retirement and reflection, in the temper of the haughty, impracticable peer, whom none of them had been able to tolerate in office. The ghastly countenance of the groom of the chambers, who suddenly appeared at one of the large doors of the ball-room, where he whispered to the nobleman standing nearest, and who instantly followed him out, sufficed to give token of something awful having happened. In a moment the dancing ceased; the music was hushed; hurried whispering was heard; agitated faces were seen; hasty gestures were observed; and when Lord Milverstoke quitted the apartment, with a face suddenly blanched and overspread with horror, amazement and terror reached their climax. Faint shrieks, and presently loud cries, and universal agitation ensued throughout the Castle; and, in a few moments more, all was known, and Lord Milverstoke verging on madness.

The banquet of that day had partaken, as has been already stated, of a military character, in compliment to Lord Alkmond; and the Earl of Milverstoke and several of the guests had quitted the room some time before the happening of the catastrophe, leaving Lord Alkmond and most of his brother officers at the dinner-table for awhile to themselves. The conversation was for some time gay and animated, till accidentally a topic was introduced, which only one or two of those present perceived to be, for some reason or other, distasteful to Lord Alkmond; for he changed colour, and immediately addressed the person next to him on another subject. The general conversation, however, continued on the topic alluded to; and Lord Alkmond was at length observed, by one next to him, to be seriously disquieted; becoming silent, and uttering suppressed sighs. At length all of them quitted the table, to repair to the ball-room. Lord Alkmond was seen by some servants, directly afterwards, leaving the Castle, with his hat on; but this attracted no special notice, since his lordship was frequently in the habit of taking solitary rambles in the woods. He walked, as it afterwards appeared, for a time to and fro on the grand terrace; then descended from it by a by-path into the wood; and was not seen again till his body was brought into the hall, carried by the two dragoons (several of whom were guests in the servants' hall), followed by several other per-

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sons, all greatly agitated. The head keeper, with two under keepers, had, while going his rounds in the woods, heard suddenly a dull, heavy sound; then that as of a person falling, accompanied by, apparently, a faint groan or sigh; then steps, as of one running. Continuing to move onward in the direction whence the sounds seemed to come, they encountered a body stretched on the ground; and, to their inconceivable horror, presently recognised Lord Alkmond, wrapped in a great-coat, bleeding profusely from a frightful blow on the side of the head, and speechless, motionless, senseless, DEAD.

"Follow! follow! follow those steps! I hear some one running!" exclaimed the head keeper, remaining by the body, while his companions started off in obedience to his orders.

"Hollo!—There! there's the murderer!" presently they shouted violently; for they had caught sight of the figure of a man running with great rapidity, and who at one bound cleared a wall, and got into the high-road, where he resumed running; on which one of the two pursuers fired, but missed the fugitive.

"Ha!—I know him!" exclaimed one of the two followers; "it's Adam Ayliffe!" and while the one who had not fired continued the pursuit, the other ran to the barracks, which were at but a short distance from that part of the road; and the result was, the capture of Ayliffe, as the monster who had done this deed of cruelty and horror.

The next morning at an early hour the formidable prisoner was delivered up to the civil power; but owing to the public excitement, which was every moment increasing, the military were requested to escort the prisoner to the justice-hall of the neighbouring magistrate, Sir Henry Harrington, being the same who had adjudicated on the prisoner so short a time before, for the trifling delinquency of which the reader has heard. The moment that the miserable man was seen, heavily ironed, staggering from the cage into the post-chaise which was to convey him to the magistrate's, a groan issued from the appalled by-standers; one of mingled pity, terror, and wonder. Those who caught the nearest glance at the prisoner, from behind the horses of the dragoons, saw the blood on his left sleeve, and shuddered. His eyes were bloodshot; his forehead was severely bruised, and much swollen, with the blows which he had given himself over-night; his lips were tightly compressed; and he uttered not a syllable to the officer who accompanied him. In another chaise were the clerk of the peace and Mr Hylton, the latter intending to be present in his magisterial capacity. They set off at a rapid pace, preceded and followed by the dragoons. Their road lay past Ayliffe's cottage, and, as they approached it, the unhappy prisoner became terribly excited. He sat upright, and stared with a half-frenzied eye as they passed. A woman had just quitted the cottage with a child covered up under her red cloak: it was the infant son of the prisoner, whom she was carrying to her own home for a while, at Mr Hylton's request, the mother lying desperately ill, and about to be taken to the infirmary the moment that it could be done with safety—if indeed her doom were not already sealed, and she could be moved elsewhere than to the churchyard. The prisoner moaned heavily as they drove past, and sunk back with a deep groan in the chaise. There was already a considerable concourse around the gates of the magistrate's house, and it was deemed prudent for the military to remain till the proceedings were over.

There were three justices present, including Mr Hylton, who looked harassed and most unhappy. He had been up several hours during the night, in attendance at the cottage, where indeed at that moment was Mrs Hylton herself in compassionate attendance on her poor suffering sister. When Ayliffe, heavily ironed, entered the justice-room, with a constable on each side, he seemed not to observe any one before him; but presently his eye lit on Mr Hylton, who sat at the table, his head leaning on his hand, which concealed his face from Ayliffe.

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"Sir!—Mr Hylton!" shouted the prisoner with frantic energy, "oh, say for me! could I do this thing that I am charged with? No, no, no! you know I could not!"

Mr Hylton unconsciously shook his head without removing the hand that supported it. Again the prisoner addressed him, with wild gestures and a loud hoarse voice:

"How's Sarah, sir? how's my wife?"

Mr Hylton shook his head and remained silent; and then the prisoner sunk down on the bench that was placed for him, his heavy irons clanking dismally. The hearing was not long, nor was much more disclosed than has been already told. The doctor who had been summoned to the Castle on the horrid occasion declared that death must have been instantaneous, for that the wound was most frightful, and had been inflicted with a bludgeon, or some other heavy instrument. The blood on the prisoner's sleeve was pointed out, at which he seemed suddenly roused from a sort of stupor; and Mr Hylton, observing it, instantly arose, and with an air of great agitation quitted the room, nor did he return again.

"Have you any other evidence to adduce?" said the magistrate.

"None, an't please your worship."

"Is any one else suspected?"

"Nobody at present, an't please your worship; but a strict inquiry is on foot."

The justices' clerk then read over to the witnesses what had been taken down from their lips—the prisoner's haggard countenance, and eyes fixed intently on the floor, showing that he was not attending to what was going on. When the depositions had all been read over, and signed by the witnesses,

"Adam Ayliffe," said the magistrate, "hearken to me—thou standest committed for the wilful murder of the late Lord Viscount Alkmond."

"It is false! I never murdered him! I know naught about it: and ye are all driving me mad!" cried the prisoner, in a loud hoarse voice, starting up and looking wildly at the principal magistrate, who calmly signed the warrant of committal as soon as it had been made out; and within an hour's time Ayliffe was safely lodged in the county gaol, having been escorted thither by the dragoons, for fear of any sudden and desperate resistance being offered by one of such formidable courage and strength as the prisoner. When the proceedings were closed, the two committing magistrates withdrew into another room, where was Mr Hylton, walking about in much perturbation; and the three had a long conversation on the mysterious and frightful transaction which had called them together that day. Mr Hylton was asked with much interest by his brother magistrates concerning the passionate appeal which had been made to him by the prisoner, but said only, that to him what had happened appeared an awful mystery; that the prisoner was by nature one of the frankest, best natured, and best behaved men in the world, and had been brought up by a father who was himself a pattern of virtue and piety.

"Ah!" said one, "there is something very fine in the character of old Ayliffe; I know a little of him; and grieved indeed I am for him!"

"What conceivable *motive*," commenced Mr Hylton—

"Stay," said Sir Henry Harrington, dropping his voice almost to a whisper—"you do not forget a former occurrence in this justice-room some few days ago, good friend, when you acted so liberally?"

"Alas! of what avail was it?" said Mr Hylton.

"That is not what I mean," quoth Sir Henry; "I heard a word or two muttered by the prisoner on that occasion, which perhaps no one else did:" and he repeated what had caught his ear, unless, indeed, as he said, he had been greatly mistaken, and about which he declared that he would make some private inquiry. He mentioned the words, and after a pause, Mr Hylton sighed, changed colour a little, and shook his head. "Well, still,"

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said he, "I cannot believe he did this murder!"

On the ensuing evening sat the coroner's inquest, at the Blind Hound, an inn in the village; and the jury having been taken to the Castle, and seen the body of the murdered nobleman, which lay just as it had been brought in from the woods, and was a sight which none of them could ever forget, they heard substantially the same evidence which had been given before the magistrates, and at once returned a verdict of wilful murder against Adam Ayliffe; all of them, on retiring to their various homes in the village and neighbourhood, expressing amazement and horror; and deep sympathy for poor old Ayliffe, and the prisoner's wife. Rigorous inquiries elicited no circumstances which could throw any light on an event which soon occasioned considerable excitement throughout the whole kingdom. The woods had been scoured all night long by soldiers from the barracks, constables, gamekeepers, villagers, and others, but in vain. There was nothing to afford a trace of the deed which had so recently been done, but the dismal crimson spot that had witnessed the mysterious and horrible occurrence which had extinguished the mortal life of the next heir to the domains and dignities of Milverstoke, in the very flower of his youthful manhood. Poor Lord Alkmond was, when thus hastily smitten from the land of the living, apparently possessed of almost every imaginable worldly advantage and guarantee for happiness. He was one of the handsomest men of his day; his features were symmetry itself, at once refined and manly; he was tall and well-proportioned as his father, but his manner was infinitely more gracious and winning—at all events till latterly, when some strange spell seemed to have overshadowed his spirits, such as even the lovely wife of his bosom, now, alas! his prostrate and broken-hearted widow, could neither account for, nor was permitted by him to inquire into: a gloom which only deepened before the stern solicitude of his father. How awful the obscurity which shrouded his sudden departure! impenetrable perhaps for ever, to all but the eye of Him from whom nothing is hid; of whose ordering are all things, in perfect wisdom, not to be vainly or presumptuously questioned; and whose will it might be that this mystery should not be unravelled on earth.—Beat your fair bosoms and bewail the departed, ye lovely kindred of the dead, and of him, the living,—deep in whose dark spirit is quivering an arrow from on high! Let the light of heaven be shut out from yon gloomy and silent residence of the great ones of the earth, till their dead be buried out of their sight, and their stricken hearts enlightened, humbled, and consoled from on high.

On Saturday was the burial. Lengthened was the funeral cavalcade, and many were the noble mourners composing it, which wound slowly its way from the castle to the church of Milverstoke, where a silent assemblage of awe-struck beholders awaited it. The chief mourner was the Earl of Milverstoke, treading with firm step, his face of dreadful whiteness—a world of woe in his dark eyes! From his rigid lips had fallen no sound, since he had ordered away the attendants from the chamber of the dead, that he might himself pace, the livelong night, alone, before the bier of his murdered son. He now followed into the church, and to the black entrance of the vault, the remains of that—his only son, in grievous silence; in all the majesty of sorrow and suffering; seen by every beholder to be too great and awful to be approached, or intermeddled with. Oh, with what solemnity was read the Service for the Dead, stirring the very soul alike of every great one, and humble one, who heard, that day, the voice of the minister of God! Fain would Mr Hylton have devolved that sad office upon another; but his duty was plain; and, though reading with a voice sometimes tremulous, he gave grand significance, because

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simple utterance, to the sublime Burial Service of the Church.

At a late hour in the evening there was delivered into the hands of the desolate and bereaved Earl, by a special messenger from London, an autograph letter from the King, expressing deep concern for his misfortune; and, so far as he could thence derive any consolation, the Earl had also abundant proof of the sympathy felt for him throughout the kingdom.

On the evening after the capture of young Ayliffe, occurred a circumstance worthy of perpetual remembrance. Mr Hylton, notwithstanding the inclemency of the weather, paid a visit to the late residence of the imprisoned malefactor, whose miserable father now tenanted it alone. There, by the dim light issuing from the low fire, Mr Hylton beheld the old man kneeling, and so absorbed in devotion that he scarcely noticed the entrance of his reverend and sympathising visitor. The old man slowly rose, however, on feeling his hand gently squeezed by that of Mr Hylton, and hearing his friendly voice. The food which had been laid beside him early in the morning lay untouched, and the old man tottered from evident faintness, while Mr Hylton assisted him from his knees to the stool on which he had been sitting. After a while he pointed, with a shaking finger, to a distant part of the room. Mr Hylton asked him what he meant. "A light, a light, sir!" said he. Mr Hylton lit a small candle which stood on a shelf over the fireplace, and on going with it to the spot to which old Ayliffe had pointed, beheld an object sufficiently startling: a thick oaken walking-stick, which had been brought in by his son on the evening of his capture; and, alas, there were upon it evident marks of blood!

"This is dreadful, Ayliffe—dreadful indeed!" said Mr Hylton, laying it down with a silent shudder; and neither he nor the old man spoke for some time, each actuated by conflicting emotions.

"It is strange: hath not the cottage been searched?" said Mr Hylton.

The old man shook his head: "No, sir," said he in a feeble tone, "that stick hath lain there ever since he came in; and"—he paused and added, with a long-drawn sigh, "but for that book," pointing to the Bible, which lay on the table beside him, "that bloody witness had not been here now."

Mr Hylton was silent. *He was a magistrate*, and his duty was painful but plain. "Ayliffe," said he, gloomily, "I am a magistrate!"

"I know thou art; and that book, with thy good teaching from it, hath taught me my duty. There must lie that sad stick till it be sent for, if sent for it must be!"

"Thou faithful servant of God," said Mr Hylton, his eyes almost blinded with tears, rising and grasping in his hands those of the old man, who spoke not—"put thy trust in God, who hath, for His own wise purposes, sent thee this terrible trial, and He will bear thee through it!"

"Ay, ay! 'though he slay me'"—began the old man; but his voice suddenly failed him.

"Whether thy son be innocent or guilty, this stick must appear against him," said Mr Hylton, firmly but mournfully; "and even were it by any accident not to be produced, yet have I seen it, and must, by force of conscience, tell that I have seen it."

"No one shall touch it, sir, while I have strength to prevent it," said the old man, laying his hand on the open Bible: "and if, as concerning my son, I have done him wrong, God forgive me: and if I do right, I pray thee, sir, give me thy prayers to help my trust, and strengthen me to do this bitter duty!"

Mr Hylton rose, and pronounced upon him a solemn benediction, and then sat opposite to him for some time in silence, lost in admiration of the old man's virtue, and troubled sorely at the duty which that virtue had just cast upon himself. "I would have given much, Adam, that it had been any other than myself who had

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come hither and seen and heard this," said he at length; "but if thine unhappy son be innocent, God may make it appear so; yet, whether He do or not, His will be done. And He cannot will that we should pervert or conceal truth!"

"He doth support me now," replied the old man, gravely and loftily. Mr Hylton gazed in silence, as though on some old patriarch or martyr risen from the dead to exemplify trust in the Almighty. The next day, alas! the dumb but dreadful witness was taken possession of by a constable, under a search-warrant, and delivered over to the proper authority. Mr Hylton's painful share in the transaction was known to none but the committing magistrate, who passed a high eulogium on what he termed the Spartan spirit of the prisoner's father.

On the Sunday succeeding the day of the funeral, the church wore a very impressive aspect. The pulpit and reading-desk were hung in black; so was the great family-pew belonging to the Castle, and untenanted, but one side of the gallery was nearly filled with a long array of the Earl's domestics, in deep mourning. The church was unusually crowded by the saddened occupants of the village and neighbourhood, and others who had come from far and wide, thinking that the Vicar might, as was his custom on those which he deemed fitting occasions, make some allusion to the awful occurrence of the past week. Nor were they mistaken or disappointed. Methinks one may now see that exemplary person in his pulpit, upon that memorable, melancholy, and exciting occasion, resolved to turn it to the profit of those who were before him. He was not quite as old as the Earl of Milverstoke; of middle stature; his hair grey; his face intellectual and somewhat care-worn, but of a most benevolent expression. He was a man of firm purpose, of stern integrity, of profound piety, and devoted to the duties of a parish priest. It was only his independence of character, indeed, which had stood in the way, some years before, of his obtaining great clerical advancement. Here, however, lay his parish, the parishioners of which he loved—whose children's dust was intermingled with the dust of his own dear children in the adjoining churchyard!

When he had entered the pulpit, and looked round upon his grave and silent congregation, his soul rose to the height of the occasion, and felt itself in unison with theirs. The few words which formed his text fell, as he pronounced them, into the hearts of all present with fearful weight:—"*Boast not thyself of to-morrow: for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.*" His own feelings forced him to pause for some moments after he had uttered that divine injunction; and there ensued, till his voice broke it, the silence of the grave. His sermon was brief, but weighty, and the chastened severity of his judgment prevented any approach to indecorous directness of allusion. It was only towards the close of his affecting and solemn address, that his voice faltered as his eye lit upon an unexpected figure in the furthermost corner of the gallery—that of old Adam Ayliffe, who had gone thither with a stern consciousness of rectitude of conduct, as far as concerned his fellow-creatures, and a lofty sense of what was at once his right, and his duty towards God—to enter the house of God, with a heart which He had smitten, to pay his vows there. Alone had he come, and unsupported, though with limbs weakened by abstinence and the agitation of the week, to *His Father's house.* As he returned home, several offered him their arms, and kindly saluted him, but he spoke not a word to any; and his silence deepened their sympathy for his sufferings, their reverence for his character. On arriving at the cottage to which his little grandchild had been taken, on its mother's removal in almost a dying state to the infirmary, he entered it, and seated himself beside the kind woman in whose lap it lay, a sad little figure. The child, recognising him, stretched forth its hand, and smiled,

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on which the old man's pent-up feelings gave way: "Nay, nay, lad," he faltered, "don't do that!—thou'lt break my heart!" And the child seemed surprised, and then somewhat alarmed, at the weeping of both his grandfather and his nurse.

"It doth not trouble thee much, I trust?" at length said Ayliffe gently.

"Nay, never at all—never was there a quieter child; 'tis content with whatever is given to it."

"This was a terrible fall," said the old man, sadly, pointing to the child's shoulder.

"Ay, it was, good Adam, and"—she pointed, sighing, to the little creature's left leg—"much it misgives me he will walk lame."

"Well, God's will be done!" said the old man, and he leaned down and kissed its forehead tenderly, while his tears fell upon it.

There was another grandfather looking, about the same time, at an infant grandson, with feelings which language cannot express or describe. And there were also two mothers, stricken and prostrate, whom it appeared to be the will of heaven to remove for ever from the sight of their children!

On the third Sunday after the funeral, two figures in deep mourning passed slowly along the aisle to the central pew in the parish church: they were the Earl of Milverstoke and his youthful daughter Lady Emily, whose beautiful but pale countenance was almost entirely hidden beneath a long black veil, and, on taking her seat, she was evidently suffering under strong emotion. No eye that saw the Earl, as he followed after her, had ever looked before on so affecting an object,—a black monument of grief unutterable. Lady Emily had placed herself at a distance from her father, wishing to avoid the sight of his pallid, wasted, and gloomy features, which bore deep and perhaps indelible traces of the sufferings which he had undergone. His was a morbid and haughty spirit, which would rather perish under the crushing pressure of misery than seek for any alleviation of it by communion with others. An expression of sympathy was, indeed, intolerable to him; and by a certain strange perversity of his nature, he appeared loath to lose sight, even for an instant, of the full extent of his wretchedness. The bulk of the congregation were simple souls, who could not forbear regarding him with a sort of subdued awe, which seemed to exclude all tendency to pity. He had rarely ever spoken to any of them, which they had attributed to his naturally cold stern habits, his occupation with high and important matters, and sorrow for the death of his Countess. A few there were who, not unnaturally, had attributed much of his apparent moodiness to sheer vexation about high political matters, and anger and mortification at not having been appointed, some two years before, Lord-Lieutenant of the county. But there was not one present, even down to the very humblest, who had ever had just occasion to complain of the Earl as a landlord, or as having turned a deaf ear to the cry of distress; and some were there whose eyes were constantly in tears, while fixed upon the haggard and emaciated features and figure, of their own munificent but secret benefactor. There also was one whom the noble mourner saw not, but whose eye was often occasionally settled upon him, under an undefinable impulse—old Ayliffe. Possibly neither of the two might have that day entered the church had he known that the other had been there. The Earl was perfectly calm, and deeply attentive to the service. Mrs Hylton's pew adjoined that of the Earl; and she was often in tears, for she several times heard stifled sobs from Lady Emily, but not one after the Earl had whispered in a low and kind, but peremptory tone,—

"Restrain your feelings, Emily, or we must retire."

When the service was concluded, the Earl and Lady Emily rose, and slowly walked down the aisle, before those in the body of the church had risen from their seats. This had not been observed, however, by old Ayliffe,

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in the gallery, who, desirous of quitting before the Earl should have left his pew, had gone as quickly as his enfeebled limbs would allow him down the stairs: yet it actually so chanced, that the two encountered each other immediately outside the little porch. The Earl involuntarily stepped back for a moment, and heaved a mighty but inaudible sigh. Then he passed on to his carriage, and threw himself back in it with much agitation. Old Ayliffe, though it was snowing thickly, had taken off his hat and bowed as the Earl passed him: trembling in every limb, he yet stood as erect as the Earl; but, when the carriage had driven off, he sat down for a moment on the nearest snow-covered grave-stone, as if staggering under the weight of his agitated feelings. Two farmers who were near kindly gave their arms to the troubled old man, and set him far on his way home.

One of them had, early in the week, driven him to the county gaol in his market-cart, and thereby afforded the unhappy father, who had obtained the requisite order for that purpose, his first opportunity of seeing his imprisoned son, who was just recovering from a violent brain fever; and, during his illness, the doctor had peremptorily forbidden any interview between his patient and his father. Old Ayliffe was very minutely searched by the turnkey before he was allowed to enter. He shook his head and sighed during the operation. "These be the orders of this place," said the turnkey gruffly; "poison and razors have been found before now on folks going in to see murder-prisoners."

Ayliffe trembled at the words. "No one, friend, that feared God would do so," said he, mildly and sadly.

"I don't know that," replied the turnkey, "but *now*, you are a safe man and may go in:" and the next moment the heart-broken old man stood before his unhappy son.

They were allowed to be alone for a short time, the doctor and nurse of the prison being within call, if need might be. The prisoner gently raised his father's cold hand to his lips and kissed it, and neither spoke for a few minutes; at length—

"Adam! Adam!" said the old man in a low tremulous whisper, "art thou innocent or guilty?" and his anguished eyes seemed staring into the very soul of his son, who calmly replied,—

"Father, before God Almighty, I am as innocent as thou art, nor do I know who did this terrible deed."

"Dost thou say it? Dost thou say it? I never knew thee to lie to me, Adam!" said his father eagerly, half rising from the stool on which he sate; "Dost thou say this before God, whom thou art only too likely," he shuddered, "to see, after next Assizes, face to face?"

"Ay, I do, father," replied his son, fixing his eyes solemnly and steadfastly on those of his father, who slowly rose and placed his trembling arms around his son, and embraced him in silence: "How is Sarah?" faltered the prisoner, looking suddenly very faint.

"Ask me not, Adam," said the old man; who quickly added, perceiving the agitation of his son, "but she is not dead, my son: she hath been kindly cared for."

"And the lad?" inquired the prisoner, still more faintly.

"He is well," said the old man, and the prisoner shook his head in silence, the tears running down his cheeks, through closed eyelids.

At this point the doctor re-entered, apprehensive for the safety of his patient, and ordered the visitor at once to withdraw, as he did, having tenderly kissed the fevered forehead of his son. As the old man passed the governor's room, he was called in, and offered a glass of wine, which had been kindly placed in readiness for him.

"No, no, I thank thee, sir," said he, somewhat excitedly; "I need it not; I have just gotten a great cordial, that hath warmed my heart!"

"Ay, ay! who gave it thee?" quickly inquired the governor.

"My son, thy poor prisoner! for he hath told me that he is innocent," said the old man confidently.

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"Oh! hath he?" quoth the governor gravely, with melancholy significance; and not choosing to say more, the venerable and grief-worn visitor was presently ushered out of the gloomy gates of the gaol. When next he saw Mr Hylton, he spoke of his son in the like confident tone in which he had spoken to the governor.

"Adam, it is not his mere *saying* that he is innocent, that will satisfy the judge and the jury at the coming Assizes," said Mr Hylton, seriously; "be not, my poor friend, over sanguine, for the case has very, very black features in it, Adam! Has your son explained to you how he came into the wood just when he did? why he fled as for his life? how he got the blood upon his coat and his stick? Alas, Adam, these are terrible things to deal with; and"—he paused and seemed troubled—"there may be, for aught you or I know, other matters proved, still blacker!"

Old Ayliffe listened to all this in silence, but his face had whitened visibly as Mr Hylton proceeded.

"He's innocent, sir, for all that,' at length said he; "he never lied to me since he was born, sir; and I trust in God that He will not let the innocent suffer for the guilty!"

"So indeed do I," replied Mr Hylton, solemnly; "but go you to the attorney whom we have engaged to take up the case on your son's behalf, and see what he says: I, you must always remember, am a magistrate, and therefore desire not to hear what conscience might possibly hereafter force me to disclose."

"Ay, ay, sir," said the old man sadly, sighing deeply: "I see it, I know it; appearances be against my son terribly; but my lord judge will be a just man, and may find out my son's innocence, though others may be unable to see it till then."

That which greatly disturbed Mr Hylton, was the communication which had been made to him by the county magistrate, of the remark of young Ayliffe in the matter of the hare, and which undoubtedly gave a dismal complexion to the already overwhelming case against him.

CHAPTER IV.

Some short time after their first appearance at church, Lady Emily called upon Mrs Hylton, whom she had always tenderly loved from her childhood, being tenderly beloved in return. It was a painful interview, and both of them wept much. The poor girl's feelings had long been strung to the highest pitch of intensity, scarce ever relieved by communion with her father, though he really loved her fondly. Partly owing to his nature, however, and partly from a belief that conversation would but make deep wounds bleed afresh, he rarely spoke to her on the subject of the event which had enveloped the Castle in a desolate gloom, which, to him, formed indeed a darkness that might be felt. Besides all this, she was almost constantly an attendant on her miserable and heart-broken sister-in-law, Lady Alkmond, whose recovery from the shock which she had sustained seemed to the last degree uncertain; and that uncertainty and fear occasioned the Earl an intolerable agony of apprehension, lest his infant grandson, now an object precious in his eyes beyond all comparison or expression,

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should be deprived of his surviving parent. What delight thrilled through the heart of Mrs Hylton, when she found the lovely creature before her, reverentially recognising, without a murmur, without a question, in the disaster which had befallen her family, the ordination of the all-wise Disposer of events!

"Thus," said she, "you spoke to me, Mrs Hylton, when my poor mamma was taken from us: thus she herself spoke to us, only a short time before she died! I wish my dear papa saw these things so; but he is always so stern and gloomy!"

"Depend upon it, my dear, dear Lady Emily," said Mrs Hylton, "that all which has happened may one day plainly appear to us to have been for the best: or it may please the Almighty never to reveal his purposes to us! And if he do not, can we help ourselves? What can we say or do, but submit to Omnipotence?"

While they were thus talking, Mr Hylton rode up to the door, and seeing the Earl's carriage there, looked at the window, and recognised Lady Emily. Hastily uncovering, he dismounted, and led his horse round to the stable.

"Why do you change colour, dear Mrs Hylton," said Lady Emily with surprise, preparing to go.

"Shall I tell you where Mr Hylton has been?" said Mrs Hylton, after a moment's pause.

"Yes, if you please, unless there is any objection."

"He has just been to the infirmary"—

"What! are you afraid of fever? Don't fear for me," said Lady Emily, with a faint smile; but added hastily, "stay — remember poor Lady Alkmond, whom I am with all day—and the dear child; if anything were to happen to it, I do believe my papa would die outright! for he almost trembles with fearful love, when he takes it into his arms for only a moment!"

"Oh no! dear lady Emily, there is no fever there at all, I believe. Mr Hylton has been to visit there one of the most unfortunate beings on the earth!"

"Dear Mrs Hylton, your looks alarm me. What do you mean?—who is it?"

"Alas! alas! it is the poor innocent wife of"—Lady Emily changed colour; "of that wretched man who"—Lady Emily turned deadly pale, and trembled violently. Vain were her efforts to recover from the shock, and she at length swooned, to the great consternation of Mrs Hylton. With the aid of the usual restoratives, however, she soon recovered; on which she gazed on Mrs Hylton with a look of agonising affection and apprehension.

She lay in Mrs Hylton's arms, with her raven tresses slightly disturbed, and straying over her pale but exquisitely beautiful features, Mrs Hylton gently rearranging her truant locks, and fondly kissing her forehead, as Mr Hylton entered: and Mrs Hylton motioned him to withdraw. "No, no, no!" said Lady Emily, extending her hand to him: "I am better now!"

"Why, what is all this?" inquired Mr Hylton, sufficiently surprised.

"I rather suddenly told dear Lady Emily where you had been," replied Mrs Hylton, anxiously.

"I am sorry for that, Mary," said he rather displeasedly; and he tenderly took Lady Emily by the hand, and seated himself beside her.

"How is the poor creature?" she inquired faintly.

"We will talk about this on some other occasion," said he. But Lady Emily would not have the question thus parried, and repeated it.

"She is certainly in a sad state," said Mr Hylton, sighing, and looking very grave.

"Is there any danger?" she inquired, slightly trembling.

"My dear Lady Emily, you have suffering enough at the Castle; I cannot add to what so oppresses you!"

"But how is this poor woman?" she repeated firmly; and Mr Hylton's acute eye detected in her tone and look a momentary resemblance to her father's peremptory spirit.

"She is, alas! at death's door!"

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Lady Emily remained for several moments silent, and visibly agitated.

"What sort of a character has she borne?"

"Oh, poor soul!" interposed Mrs Hylton with sudden energy, "she was one of the best, meekest, most self-denying Christian creatures that I ever saw. I have, as you know, brought her up from her early youth."

Again Lady Emily was silent. "She must not want for anything, dear Mr Hylton," said she suddenly.

"She is well cared for at our excellent infirmary; and as for her unfortunate child"—

"What! child!—has she a child?" said Lady Emily, tremulously.

"Yes! but such a poor little, lame, injured creature!"

Lady Emily burst into tears. "May God protect it!" said she at length: "Where is it?"

"It is taken care of by a woman, at one of the cottages."

"How old is it?"

"Not much more than a year."

"Nearly the same age!" exclaimed Lady Emily, half unconsciously; sighing, and apparently falling into a momentary reverie. "You said that it was lame and injured; how came it to be so, dear Mrs Hylton?"

"It was always a feeble child, and when not much more than eight months old had a sad fall, which nearly killed it, and has left it lame for life, and a little deformed in the back," said Mrs Hylton.

"How dreadful!" exclaimed Lady Emily, with a shudder: "Are you sure that the poor little thing is with a careful woman?"

"Yes."

"But who pays her to attend to it?"

"My dear husband," quickly replied Mrs Hylton, her eyes filling with tears; not caring for his displeasure, and only too proud of his conduct.

"I have ten guineas here," said Lady Emily, opening her purse eagerly, and emptying its contents into Mrs Hylton's lap: "I don't want them; I have more money than I can use; and I will bring you fifteen more to-morrow; and pray let both the mother and the child have proper attention paid to them."

"My dear Lady Emily," commenced Mr and Mrs Hylton in a breath, "the half of what you have now given us will suffice for nearly a year."

"Never mind, keep it all, and to-morrow I will give you the remainder! It is really nothing to me, I assure you; my dear papa is very, very liberal to me: I cannot spend a tenth part of what he gives me."

"Well, then, dear Lady Emily," said Mr Hylton, with energy, "I will be the almoner of your bounty willingly and carefully."

"But don't let it be known where this trifle comes from, dear Mr Hylton, lest my papa should happen to hear of it and be displeased; for he might think it undutiful in me. Will you, now, promise me this?" continued Lady Emily, winningly, but earnestly.

"I will—we both will," replied Mr Hylton; "and you have in part anticipated something of what I intended to ask you, Lady Emily."

"What is that?" she inquired anxiously.

"After what you have said, it seems hardly necessary; but I was about to have entreated you on no account to mention either of these poor beings to your harassed father, the Earl."

"Oh mercy! mention them to him!" exclaimed Lady Emily, with a great start: "oh no! not for the whole world! The very thought makes me tremble. Not that he might—but—*consider!*"—she paused, and looked anxiously at Mr and Mrs Hylton, who assured her that they perfectly understood her meaning, and profoundly sympathised with the afflicted Earl. With this she rose to depart; and, kissing Mrs Hylton, promised to call the next day with the fifteen guineas. Mr Hylton then led her to the carriage, in which sat one of her maids, wondering at her Ladyship's prolonged stay at the parsonage. As they drove rapidly away, "There goes an angel in human form!" said Mr and Mrs Hylton to each other. Ah! what a contrast did the youthful Lady Emily present before the eye of Mr Hylton, to

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her inaccessible and implacable parent! — for such, alas! he but too plainly appeared to Mr Hylton, on the very first occasion on which the Earl and he had said anything to each other at all bearing on the recent calamity. Three times had the Earl's carriage appeared before the parsonage, since the funeral, to convey Mr and Mrs Hylton, on a friendly invitation, to the Castle, to dine with its taciturn and gloomy lord and Lady Emily; and when she and Mrs Hylton had withdrawn to Lady Alkmond's chamber, Mr Hylton felt oppressed by witnessing in his companion a misery incapable of relief. He had long before thoroughly mastered the Earl's idiosyncrasy, and perceived and lamented his utterly insufficient notions of religion. A thousand times had he striven with all the delicacy and tact of which he was master—and of much indeed he was master—to turn the Earl's attention inward upon himself, but in vain: feeling himself ever courteously, though sometimes rather sternly, repulsed. About a fortnight after Lady Emily's visit to the parsonage, Mr Hylton made his appearance at the Castle, on one of those cheerless occasions which have just been spoken of; and on being left alone, as usual, after dinner, the Earl produced a sheet of paper, containing a Latin inscription, which he had been framing during the day, for a tablet or monument which he meditated erecting in memory of his son. The language was quite unexceptionable, the Earl being noted for his elegant scholarship. Mr Hylton read it attentively twice or thrice, and then laid it down before the Earl in silence.

"Has it your approbation, Mr Hylton?" said his lordship, with a melancholy air.

"The Latinity, my Lord, is, as I expected, faultless," replied Mr Hylton, with a certain significance of manner which arrested the attention of his noble companion; who remained silent for a few moments, while he cast his eye over the paper, and then said,

"I presume the matter, Mr Hylton, is unobjectionable as the manner?—I composed it in a sad spirit, I assure you." Mr Hylton remained silent, apparently absorbed in thought. "Pray, tell me frankly, Mr Hylton," said the Earl, with slight displeasure in his tone, "are you now thinking *painfully*, or disapprovingly, about what you have just read?"

"My Lord," replied Mr Hylton, solemnly, "I have been thinking how this inscription at this moment appears before the eyes of Him, whose minister and servant I am!"

"Indeed, sir!" said the Earl haughtily; "and are you intimating that it would not bear the scrutiny?"

"I fear not, my Lord, if I have read the New Testament aright. But pardon me, my Lord; if you will favour me for a day with that paper, I will give your lordship my written sentiments on the subject; and I need hardly say, with all respect and faithfulness."

"I will consider of it, sir," said the Earl gloomily, endeavouring to repress a sigh, as he returned the paper to his pocket-book.

"There is no living being, my Lord, I verily believe," said Mr Hylton, earnestly, "who wishes better to your lordship than I do, and few who think of your lordship more frequently and anxiously. Even should your lordship not feel disposed to honour me with that paper, may I ask permission to send your lordship my written impressions concerning it, chiefly upon one expression?"

"I think, sir, I know now to what you allude," said the Earl, with a lowering brow, and a stately courtesy of manner; "but I have considered the subject, and deem the expression unobjectionable: if I should feel disposed to consult you upon the matter again, I will receive your opinion in writing."

"My dear Lord, forgive me if, when appealed to, a solemn sense of duty forces me"—

"I thank you, Mr Hylton; but we need at present discuss this matter no further," said the Earl coldly.

"Be it so, my Lord," replied Mr Hylton, sadly; and after a brief interval of chilling silence, they separated; the Earl with feelings of suppressed indignation and gloomy ex-

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citement, Mr Hylton with concern and apprehension. Had he been a mere man of the world, he would have felt the supercilious demeanour and treatment of the Earl to be intolerable; but he knew himself to be invested with a holier character, to be engaged on a great and arduous mission, of which as yet scarcely anything had been accomplished. With what different feelings he quitted the little cottage of old Ayliffe, where he was a very frequent visitor; on every occasion conceiving a more and more exalted opinion of him, standing upon earth well-nigh alone in his misery, but not forgotten by his God! He was kept from the workhouse, a destination of which he had all a true Englishman's horror, solely by the kindness of a few neighbouring farmers and Mr Hylton; all of whom, understanding his feelings, contrived to find him such sort of employment for a portion of each day as supplied his slight wants, and left him time for frequent inquiries after each of the scattered members of his family—his infant grandson, his dying daughter-in-law, his death-doomed son. On one or other of these sad errands he was to be seen engaged almost every day, in all weathers, an object of universal respect and sympathy. Little, however, spoke he to any one but Mr Hylton; for his heart was sorely oppressed with fear on account of the peril of his son, suddenly charged as that son was with so tremendous a crime, and looked on with horror by the whole kingdom, as too truly was reported to the old man: a son who had passed all his life, till that moment, peacefully and virtuously. Late of nights might a curious passer-by have observed a faint light within old Ayliffe's solitary cottage; and on looking closely, seen him at one time poring over his Bible, at another on his knees. And early in the cheerless mornings, and later in the more cheerless evenings than others were found stirring, might he have been seen standing silently in the churchyard, beside the grave of his wife, with thoughts solemn and unutterable. "Here," would he say within himself, "*the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest!* And in God's good time I may lay my bones beside thee, Sarah, that we may moulder away together, till the day when we rise again, and see the meaning of everything that hath befallen us here!"

In the mean time, thicker and thicker darkness gathered around poor young Ayliffe, as the dreaded Assize-time drew near. The active kindness of Mr Hylton, and a few of the chief inhabitants of the village, had provided the prisoner with professional assistance, in preparing for his defence; but as time wore on, it somehow or other got abroad, that the skilful and experienced attorney who had been retained, looked disheartened about the business, though knowing his duty better than to speak despondingly to any one but the prisoner: whom he told, and sickened in telling, that though he verily believed him to be innocent, he could not see how the judge and jury were to be brought to look at the affair in the same light, without *witnesses* to guide them. Many and anxious were the conversations between Mr Hylton and old Ayliffe on the dismal subject of the approaching trial; and more and more frequent their interviews became, as the time of that trial drew nearer. The miserable old man was wasted, so to speak, to a shadow; and but for the patient indulgence of his agonised inquiries by Mr Hylton, an overstrained and overburthened mind might have given way. Little, indeed, could be conscientiously said to him to sustain hopes of a favourable issue; Mr Hylton dwelling, on the contrary, strongly upon the dreadful directness of the evidence which it was understood was ready to be brought forward. The old man, however, gave implicit credit to his son's protestations, not only of innocence, but of total ignorance who the murderers were, or why the murder had been committed.

"But why went Adam that night to the wood? Why were his clothes stained with blood? Why did he run from the wood with that bloody staff, as for his life?" asked Mr Hylton:

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"these, as I have often told you, my poor friend, are questions which it is very terrible to hear asked, and not satisfactorily answered!"

"Sir, I do verily believe," replied Ayliffe, "that he can show why he did all these things, and is yet innocent."

"Can he? can he? How?" inquired Mr Hylton anxiously. "What witnesses has he?"

His companion pressed his hand against his forehead: "May the Lord have mercy on him, poor soul!" said he; I misgive me that he hath not any witnesses to speak for him; but he may surely, when he is on trial, *say* what is the truth of the matter, and God may put it into the hearts of those whom he pleads before to believe him; for I will swear for him, that he never did speak an untrue word that I know of in his life: and as for cruelty—why, he hath the heart of a very woman, for all his strength and spirit! Oh, sir, why *should* poor Adam do this bloody wickedness? What hate had *he* against the young Lord?"

"Adam," said Mr Hylton, looking steadfastly at Ayliffe, "that is likely to be an awful question, from what I have heard. 'Tis whispered that they can show malice, on your son's part, towards the late Lord Alkmond; that he hath been heard to mutter"—

While Mr Hylton spoke, a sickening change came over the features of the old man, and he almost groaned aloud.

"What! do you fear," said Mr Hylton kindly, "that any may be coming to swear falsely against him?"

Ayliffe remained silent, and looked the picture of despair; for while Mr Hylton was dwelling, in his own mind, on the expressions which he knew that young Ayliffe would be shown to have let fall, when he was convicted for unlawfully having possession of the hare, the old man suddenly recollected, for the first time since his son's arrest, his sullen refusal to stay and salute the young Lord as he passed the cottage on coming down from London, and the strong expressions accompanying that refusal. And with those expressions were quickly associated certain others which also old Ayliffe had till then forgotten, and which, thus combined, and coupled with the suggestion thrown out by Mr Hylton, suddenly acquired a significance that was appalling. The old man staggered under the shock; and the doubts and fears which had vanished before his son's solemn asseveration of innocence, when first his father saw him in gaol, now reappeared with tenfold force. Mr Hylton perceived that the unhappy father's misery had reached its climax; for his long and fondly cherished confidence in his son's truth and innocence seemed suddenly shattered. Mr Hylton spoke with infinite kindness to him, but in a very guarded way.

"Tell me, Adam," said he, "if you choose, what is the explanation which your son is going to give of the strange and horrid circumstances in which he was found: you may do so with perfect safety, for, on consideration, I can see no impropriety in my hearing, though I am a magistrate, what his defence is likely to be."

On this Ayliffe told Mr Hylton what his son's statement was; and Mr Hylton listened to it with deep attention.

"That is the whole matter, sir," said the old man as he concluded; adding with a grave eagerness, "And dost not thou believe it, sir? Ay, ay, thou wouldst, knowing but my son as well as I do, sir?"

"Let me consider a little, Adam—let me consider," said Mr Hylton, seriously.

Old Ayliffe gazed at him with intense anxiety for some minutes, during which Mr Hylton was evidently deep in thought.

"Of course, all this has been told to your attorney?" at length he inquired.

"Every word on't, sir — every word!" answered Ayliffe, eagerly.

"And what says he of it?"

"Why, sir, I cannot rightly make out; only that it is a serious business, such as a counsellor must decide on; and that it will clear my son, if it be be-

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lieved; but, sir, I would rather know what thou dost think on't?"

Mr Hylton shook his head. "Why, Adam, the account he gives is strange, very strange; it may be quite true, but much discretion, methinks, will be required on the part of your son's counsel. I am glad, my friend, that he has so shrewd and experienced an attorney as has been engaged for him; and for the rest, may God detect the guilty, and vindicate the innocent."

"Amen, sir," said the old man; and, Mr Hylton having bade him adieu with earnest cordiality, he betook himself homeward, but with such direful misgivings as kept him awake the live-long night; and Mr Hylton himself spent some hours in revolving what he had heard, but without being able to come to any satisfactory conclusion. His first impression, however, when he woke in the morning, was that poor young Ayliffe's doom was sealed.

A few evenings before the commencement of the Assizes, Mr Hylton was at the Castle, whither he had been summoned to read the service for the Visitation of the Sick, in the chamber of Lady Alkmond. The Earl and Lady Emily were present, as had been the case on several previous occasions; and on that now referred to, the Earl, who had been during the day grievously depressed by the precarious condition of Lady Alkmond, requested Mr Hylton, on quitting the chamber, to accompany him for a few moments to the library. On being seated, "Mr Hylton," said his lordship, whose manner was so subdued as to give infinite satisfaction to the pious mind of Mr Hylton, "it has been this morning intimated to me that you are about to give evidence, at the approaching trial, in favour of the prisoner,"—pausing as he uttered the word,—"as far as his previous *character* is concerned."

"I am, my Lord," replied Mr Hylton with energy—"most warm and willing testimony, most decisive testimony: would to God, indeed, that I could speak in the like terms, and with the same justice, of many others of my parishioners, as I shall speak on the dark day, that draws near, on behalf of these Ayliffes, father and son. A more exemplary little family I never knew nor heard of; and I consider the old man, my Lord, to be a very fine character. He trained up his son as a Christian, and showed him the life of one. It is he, old Adam Ayliffe"—

"I wish merely to assure you, Mr Hylton," replied the Earl, with much of his usual haughtiness of manner, "that I can have no objection to your giving favourable testimony on behalf of the prisoner, as far as you conscientiously can do such a thing."

"Forgive me, my dear Lord," said Mr Hylton, with dignity, "if I feel impelled to say, that I need to ask no consent or permission, from any one living, to do that which is a duty incumbent upon me!"

This was said with a calm firmness, very perceptible to the Earl, who appeared for some moments as if about to say something in reply; but rather abruptly, and with a stern courtesy, he wished Mr Hylton good evening, and they parted. As the latter was passing, in deep meditation, through a long and dusky corridor which led to that part of the Castle by which he usually quitted, he thought he heard the faint sound of steps hastening towards him, and the rustling of a lady's dress. Nor was he mistaken: for Lady Emily, with her finger on her lips, and a furtive glance round, hastily approached him, and whispered hurriedly, but softly, "How is that poor woman at the infirmary?"

"She remains barely alive, dear Lady Emily."

"Is she resigned, poor creature?"

"I think so; but she is often miserable, and her mind, latterly, wanders much."

"Could she be better cared for if she were removed to a private house?"

"Certainly not, my dear Lady Emily; she cannot possibly have better nursing and medical attendance than she has now. I have my-

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self given special instructions on the subject."

"And"—her voice faltered—"that wretched little being, her poor child, is it"—

At that moment were heard distant footsteps, which both Lady Emily and Mr Hylton recognised as those of the Earl; and Lady Emily vanished as though she had been a spirit.

CHAPTER V.

At length arrived the day of the great murder trial, which the judges of Assize had fixed for Friday—a day always, in those times, when practicable, named for cases of murder, with the humane view of giving, in the event of conviction, as long an interval as possible for carrying into effect the dreadful sentence of the law; which then required execution for murder to be done on the day next but one after conviction, unless that day should be *Sunday;* and then, on the Monday following. There were two other capital cases coming on early in the Assizes, but of no public interest; being only those of a farmer's man, for stealing a pair of shoes from a booth in a fair, and another for taking a cheese, in the night-time, out of a dairy—both the offenders being found with the stolen property upon them! These were, therefore, simple cases, and could be quickly disposed of. But the great murder trial appeared to have attracted nearly half the county into the Assize town, besides many persons of quality from distant parts of the country. The case was to be tried before the Lord Chief Justice, who was a humane man, and a great lawyer; and the Solicitor-general had come down, on the part of the crown, to conduct a case of such public interest and importance. The town was astir from four o'clock in the morning; since which hour a great number of country-folk, who had walked five, ten, and even fifteen miles, had been standing outside the gaol, till the doors should be opened. There were upwards of a thousand people thus collected, being very many more than by any means could be got into the gallery; and as for the body of the court and the bench, all that part had been allotted to persons of distinction, long beforehand, by orders from the Sheriff. At a few minutes before nine o'clock, the Judge was to be seen, sitting in his imposing scarlet and ermine robes in the Sheriff's coach, preceded by a troop of javelin-men and trumpeters; and so excited was the crowd, through which they slowly passed, that many of them thought there was something very startling and dismal in the sounds of the trumpets on that morning. The Judge, who was noted for punctuality, took his seat while the clock was striking nine. On sitting down, he seemed for a moment to be adjusting his robes; but he was also secretly disposing *his black cap*, so as to have it in readiness against a sad event which, having read what had been deposed to before the Coroner's jury, and the magistrates who had committed the prisoner, his lordship foresaw was but too likely to happen. This done, he leaned back for a moment, and, while the stir raised by his entrance was subsiding, looked around him with grave composure, not at all surprised at the prodigious number of people who were present. On the bench near him were noblemen and gentlemen of

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high rank (but no ladies, as nowadays happens), whom he knew well, but then took no notice of whatever. The seats round and beneath him were crowded by counsel: among whom, facing the jury-box, was Mr Solicitor-General, who had a grave, care-worn face; and a little to his right was the counsel engaged on behalf of the prisoner, but only to cross-examine the witnesses, or (if he could) detect an objection to the proceedings, in point of law—the law not allowing him to say one word for his client to the jury. Next to him sat his attorney, and both of them looked very anxious. Beside the attorney who conducted the case for the Crown, sate the Earl's solicitor and Mr Oxley. In the magistrates' box might have been seen Mr Hylton, looking pale and harassed. Just before taking his seat, he had quitted poor old Ayliffe, whom, with infinite effort, he had at length prevailed upon to remain out of court, in a room close by, with every comfort kindly provided for him by the High Sheriff. From the moment that Mr Hylton sat down, he seemed buried in his own thoughts — his head leaning on his hands, which quite covered his agitated face. "Put the prisoner to the bar," said the officer of the court to the gaoler, and there was instantly a solemn silence, broken presently by the clanking sound of irons; and amidst beating hearts, hurried breathing, and eyes intently fixed on the dock, there slowly approached it, accompanied by two gaolers, and walking, not without difficulty, in his heavy irons, a tall marvellously well-proportioned man, apparently about thirty years old, with a countenance that, especially irradiated, as it happened just then to be, by a transient gleam of sunshine, said instantly to all present that it could never be that of a MURDERER. All were struck by it. 'Twas a frank manly face, of a dauntless English cast, yet looked somewhat emaciated from illness and confinement. But for this, there was not among the gentle or simple who beheld him a finer specimen of the Saxon countenance, including even the colour and disposition of his hair, somewhat disordered though it seemed. He stood straight upright at the bar, with an air of manly and somewhat indignant confidence; having bowed decorously to the Judge, who was eyeing him very earnestly. His pale face had reddened a little, as he first encountered so exciting a scene, on an occasion to him so unspeakably awful and momentous. His light blue eye spoke most eloquently in his favour, being full of intelligence and spirit, and indicative of goodness; but there was much in them that told of suffering. While the Judge gazed at him, the favourable impression created by his countenance and demeanour was deepening, but was presently effaced, by habitual caution, and a recollection of what he had read concerning the case in the depositions.

"Adam Ayliffe," said the Clerk of Assize, "hold up thy hand!" The prisoner obeyed, holding up his right hand, which was observed to quiver a little. Had *that hand*, thought everybody, done the deed of blood that was now to be inquired into? Then the Clerk of Assize proceeded— "Thou standest indicted by the name of Adam Ayliffe, late of the Parish of Milverstoke, in this County, labourer, for that thou, not having the fear of God before thine eyes, but being moved and seduced by the instigation of the devil, on the 31st day of December last, in the Parish of Milverstoke, in this County, in and upon one FitzStephen Geoffry Lionel Bevylle, Esquire, commonly called Viscount Alkmond, in the peace of God and of our Lord the King then and there being, feloniously, wilfully, and of thy malice aforethought, didst make an assault, and then and there with a certain bludgeon, in thy right hand then and there held, in and upon the head of him, then and there feloniously, wilfully, and with malice aforethought, with the bludgeon aforesaid, didst give him a mortal wound, whereof he then and there instantly died; and so him, the said FitzStephen Geoffry

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Lionel Bevylle, in manner and form aforesaid, thou feloniously, wilfully, and of thy malice aforethought, didst thereby, then, and there kill and murder, against the peace of our said Lord the King, his crown and dignity. How sayest thou, Adam Ayliffe? art thou guilty of the murder and felony with which thou standest indicted, or not guilty?"

"Not guilty! not guilty!" said the prisoner quickly, with great energy, and his chest visibly heaved.

"How wilt thou be tried?"

"By God and my country," replied the prisoner, prompted by one of the turnkeys near him.

"God send thee a good deliverance!" quoth the Clerk of Assize.

"Let the prisoner's irons be removed," said the Judge, after having spoken privately to the Sheriff; who had told him of the prisoner's recent severe illness, that no rescue had ever been attempted, and that no violence was to be apprehended.

On this the irons were knocked off, during which process the Clerk of Assize thus addressed him:—"Prisoner at the bar! Those good men whose names thou wilt now hear called over, are THE JURY, who are to pass between our Sovereign Lord the King and thee, upon thy trial. If, therefore, thou wouldst challenge them, or any of them, thou must do so when each comes to the book to be sworn, and before he is sworn, and thou shalt be heard."

The prisoner listened to this brief but significant address so intently as to be apparently unaware of the act by which he was being liberated from his irons.

Every juryman was then thus publicly and separately sworn by the crier:—"Thou shalt well and truly try, and true deliverance make, between our Sovereign Lord the King and the prisoner at the bar, whom thou shalt have in charge; and a true verdict give, according to the evidence. So help thee God!"

When the twelve had been counted aloud, one by one, and their names called over, the crier thus made proclamation:—"If any one can inform my Lords the King's Justices, the King's Serjeant, or Attorney-General, on this inquest to be now taken between our Sovereign Lord the King and the prisoner at the bar, of any treasons, murders, felonies, or misdemeanours done or committed by the prisoner at the bar, let him come forth, and he shall be heard, for the prisoner now stands upon his deliverance; and let all persons bound, by their recognisance, to prosecute or give evidence against the prisoner at the bar, come forth and give evidence, or they will forfeit their recognisances." After a moment's pause, the Clerk of Assize said to the prisoner, "Adam Ayliffe, hold up thy hand!" and, on his doing so, thus addressed the jury—"Gentlemen of the jury, look upon the prisoner, and hearken to his charge." Then he read the substance of the indictment, and proceeded,—"Upon this indictment the prisoner hath been arraigned: upon his arraignment he hath pleaded Not guilty. Your charge, therefore, is to inquire whether he be guilty or not guilty, and to hearken to the evidence."

The Solicitor-General, on rising to state the case to the jury, turned for a moment to the Judge, and whispered; on which, "Prisoner," said the Judge, with a kind and dignified air, "I hear that you have been ill, and may be unable, with comfort, to stand; you may therefore be seated, if you choose."

"I would rather stand, my Lord, till I cannot—with thanks to your lordship," replied Ayliffe, with an air of respectful firmness which pleased everybody; and the next moment Mr Solicitor-General had commenced his speech to the jury—speaking with a directness and cogency utterly sickening to all who felt any interest in him whose life depended on the proof, or disproof, of what was being stated in that brief speech. Mr Solicitor made, indeed, a very plain case of it.

"That a foul and bloody murder (it signified nought that it had been done upon a young nobleman, more than upon any other person, high or low, man,

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woman, or child, in the land) had been committed, was beyond all reasonable doubt whatever; and the only question that day to be tried was, whether the prisoner had done that murder. He is seen," continued Mr Solicitor, "as you will be told by the witnesses, within a few yards of the place where lay the newly murdered body; his clothes have a great stain of blood on them; he has a club with him, which, marked with blood, is found in his house; he flies, as for his life, from the spot where the body lay; and, being hotly pursued, reaches home with this blood on him, and this club with him; and, while panting and affrighted, is arrested. This of itself surely is the very case put by my Lord Coke, as that of a most violent presumption of guilt; and his words are these: 'It is, if one be run through the body with a sword, in a house, whereof he instantly dieth, and a man is seen to come out of that house with a bloody sword, and no other man was at that time in the house.' If the prisoner answer not; nor explain away what will be proved against him; nor show how he came to be in my Lord Milverstoke's wood that evening, at that very time, and to be running away bloody, and with a bloody weapon capable of doing the deed, and yet quite unconcerned in, and ignorant of, this most barbarous and horrid murder—why, gentlemen, what shall be said? Whatever must, in such case, be said, it is for you alone to say. But the Crown will, as I am instructed, carry this matter much further than even all this; and will show an evil will and malice aforethought of the man at the bar, towards my Lord Milverstoke and his late son, the murdered person, arising, so I am told, out of some angry feeling at the desire of my Lord Milverstoke to become the purchaser of some cottage property of the prisoner's father; but more especially because of a poaching affair, which had occurred only some week or so previously to the murder—and on that occasion the prisoner was convicted of poaching on my Lord Milverstoke's land"—here the prisoner made some eager gesture of dissent, but was anxiously motioned to silence by his advisers—"and then let fall some expressions which I shall leave to a witness to tell you, and which will, I fear, be thought by you to have a serious bearing on this case. These, gentlemen, are the facts which, I am told, we shall prove most clearly before you: so that, you see, however dreadful the consequences of this crime, and exalted the position in society of the victim and his bereaved relatives, with whom there is, as there surely ought to be, a universal sympathy, the case is short and simple on the part of the Crown, who have no wish (God forbid that they should have) to press on the prisoner. He may not make his defence before you by counsel—such is the law of the land, be it good, be it bad—but this I know, it secures him a counsel in the Judge who tries him, and who will take all fitting care of his interests, as well as those of the public."

With this, Mr Solicitor-General sat down; and the case was not long in being proved, much as the reader has it already. The head-keeper and two under-keepers were called as witnesses, and explained that, as they were going their customary rounds, they heard, some twenty or thirty yards off from a particular spot where they were, a dull heavy sound, followed by a fall, then something like a faint groan or sigh, and footsteps. "Hallo!" cried the head-keeper, "what is that?" Then all three pushed on, spreading a few yards from each other, when, just as they had got into a pathway, one of them stumbled over the body of Lord Alkmond, and cried "Murder;" while the two others, hearing running footsteps, followed in their direction till they caught sight of the prisoner; and, after he had cleared the wall and got into the high-road, fired after him ineffectually; and finally he was arrested, in the manner which has been described. His Lordship was in dinner dress, but had put on a dark great-coat before quitting the Castle; and nothing about his person had been taken away or disturbed.

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The doctor who had been called in described the blow which Lord Alkmond had been struck to have been most tremendous, such as that death must have followed almost instantly; and that the blow had been given by some heavy blunt instrument, and from behind. Then was produced the thick oaken stick, which was proved to have been taken from the prisoner's house a day or two after the murder, and which still bore blood-stains on it. (At all this the prisoner was much agitated, using vehement gestures, which were with difficulty restrained by his advisers beneath, and the turnkeys behind him.) The doctor said, upon being asked the question, that such an instrument was quite sufficient to occasion the blow which Lord Alkmond had received, and from which he had died

"Nay! God help me, but it is not true!—it cannot be!—it is not so!" exclaimed the prisoner, with agitation; but he was temperately checked by the Judge.

Then were produced, by the constable, the clothes which the prisoner had worn when arrested. The left sleeve of the coat must, on that night, have been almost soaked in blood; and other parts of his dress had also marks of blood on them. The prisoner turned ghastly white as these dumb witnesses were arrayed before him and the jury: there was agony in his averted eye; and he shuddered—so indeed did most of those in court: and his agitation at that moment did him mischief, perhaps irreparable, in the minds of the jury.

Then was called Mr Oxley—and the prisoner changed colour on hearing the name. This proved to be, indeed, a terrible witness: for, speaking in a mild and somewhat prepossessing way, and with a show of reluctance, he yet mentioned expressions used by the prisoner, which, in the judgment of everybody present, established great ill-will towards the noble owner of Milverstoke. He said that he feared the beginning of the son's grudge was the Earl's having bought, on several occasions, parts of a little property owned by the prisoner's father, and showing a desire, through the witness, to purchase the remainder, but at a price vastly beyond its value. That on one occasion the prisoner had said to the witness, in a sullen way, "Those that live in the cottage may outlive those that live in the Castle!"

The prisoner, on hearing this, gave a prodigious start, and a glance of wrathful astonishment at the witness, which were observed by the watchful Judge.

"Was any one present, sir, besides you two, when this was said?" inquired his lordship, with a tincture of sternness in his manner.

"No, my Lord; we were alone," said the witness.

"I never, never said such words—no, nor any like them—nor ever thought them, good my Lord!" exclaimed the prisoner, vehemently.

Mr Oxley looked sadly towards the jury, and shook his head. Then he spoke of the conviction for poaching, of which he made a far blacker business than the other. He said that the prisoner, knowing the hare to have come from Lord Milverstoke's land, muttered, thinking himself unheard by any, and no one *did* hear him but the witness, "*They* shall rue it *that own that hare.*"

With this answer sat down, very gravely, the counsel for the Crown; but the prisoner became deadly pale, and said aloud, in a kind of agony, to the counsellor beneath him—"I said not so! I never had a thought to say so! O that my poor life should thus be sworn away!"

On this his attorney got up, and whispered to him earnestly, so did he to the attorney, and the latter to the counsel, who thereupon rose, and was going to ask the witness a question, when a piece of paper was handed to him from the magistrate's box, written by Mr Hylton in great agitation: it was this—"Ask Mr Oxley whether the words did not apply to another, who had got him into trouble by giving him the hare; and whether they were not—'*he* shall rue it, *that brought me here!*' Tell him that this is written

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by one who was at the Justice's on that day."

This question was closely pressed on Mr Oxley; but he said, with great firmness—"No; the words were as I have sworn to them, and closely noted at the time, not liking the prisoner's looks. I thought of them often afterwards, before this murder was committed: but never dreamed of anything so bloody as this coming of it, or would have had him bound in sureties of the peace, I warrant you!"

"And will you say this, when those are present who were then there?"

"Yes, I will: whether they heard it or not, I cannot tell; but I did. If they heard differently, let them say so."

Mr Oxley happened to know that Sir Henry Harrington, the magistrate who had convicted poor Ayliffe, was ill at home of the gout.

"Did the magistrate's clerk hear it?" inquired the counsel for the prisoner, after much hesitation.

"I cannot say: being busy, he might, or might not. I have not spoken to him on the matter."

Several other questions the counsel was disposed to have put, but refrained—perceiving, and having, indeed, been assured what sort of person the witness was, and how disposed towards the prisoner; so he sat down, and Mr Solicitor-General asked no further questions.

"But," said the Judge, in a calm and scrutinising way, "Mr Oxley, you will be pleased to repeat the very self-same words which you allege the prisoner to have used, on each of the two occasions which you have spoken of."

Mr Oxley immediately did so, with the variation of only an immaterial word or two.

"Do you positively swear, sir, that his words before the magistrate were not—'He shall rue it, that brought me here?'"

"I do, my Lord. His words were—'they that own that hare.'"

"Is not the sound of the one somewhat like that of the other?"

"Not, my Lord—not as the prisoner pronounced it."

"Of course the man was present who had informed against him?"

"Yes, my Lord; he got half the penalty."

"Did anything pass between him and the prisoner?"

"Not that I saw or heard, my Lord."

"Are they neighbours?"

"They live at some six miles' distance from each other."

"What was the man's name?"

"Jonas Hundle."

"Who or what is he?"

"For aught I know, my Lord, a decent farming-man."

"Do you know how he came by the hare that he gave or sold to the prisoner?"

"No, my Lord."

"Is Jonas Hundle still in that part of the country?"

"Yes, my Lord; I saw him last week, hedging and ditching."

"How came *you* to be at the magistrate's on that day, sir?"

"I chanced to be there on other business with the justice's clerk, and through one present offered the prisoner to pay the fine for him, if he and his father would agree with the Earl of Milverstoke about selling their cottage."

"Did he accept the offer?"

"No, my Lord; but used some horrid words concerning the Earl which I recollect not exactly."

"Have you and the prisoner ever had any dispute or difference of any sort?"

"No, my Lord," replied the witness, resolutely; "except that he has sometimes made me angry by what he said concerning the Earl and his family: otherwise we have never fallen out."

"What sort of a character bears he?"

Mr Oxley considered for a moment; and then said, in a very candid manner—"I never knew of anything to his disparagement before this matter, and that of the hare, were laid to his charge."

After a considerable pause, during which the Judge was evidently engaged in deep thought—"Pray, Mr Oxley," said he, "do you happen to know how Lord Alkmond came to be in the woods at so late an hour, and alone?"

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"No, my Lord; only I have heard"—

"That you cannot tell us, sir."

"But I know, my Lord, that when at Milverstoke, some time before, his lordship would take such walks, and go alone."

His lordship made a few notes, very deliberately; and then, laying down his pen, leaned back, and looked gloomily thoughtful. "Call back Mr Oxley," said he, just as Mr Solicitor-General was rising to say something. "Which was the taller and larger man—Lord Alkmond, or Jonas Hundle?"

"Oh, my Lord, his lordship was tall and slight, and of a beautiful figure; and Jonas Hundle is stout and short."

"Call back the head-keeper," said the Judge; and on that witness reappearing—"Have you ever," inquired his lordship, "seen this man Hundle in the woods at Milverstoke?"

"I cannot recollect, my Lord; I know but little of him."

"You told us that, before you came up with the body of Lord Alkmond, you heard sounds of something falling heavily,—of a faint sigh, or groan, and of *footsteps*,—now, did you notice in what direction those footsteps seemed to be going?"

"No, my Lord, I did not: I heard the sounds of footsteps, as I believed, and that was all; and those, I do remember, were faint, but quick."

"Can you give those gentlemen," pointing to the jury, "*no* notion on the subject?—whether the footsteps were to your right or your left—towards, or away from you?"

"No, my Lord; speaking in all truth, upon my oath I cannot."

"Were the sounds which led your companions to follow till they caught sight of the prisoner the *only* sounds of footsteps which had reached your ear between the time of your coming up with the body and your companions starting off in pursuit?"

"They were, in truth, my Lord. I heard none other whatsoever."

His lordship paused for some moments, evidently turning over anxiously in his mind the last few answers of the witness, who spoke in an earnest and simple manner.

"Were you not so greatly disturbed at seeing Lord Alkmond's body," presently inquired the Judge, "that you might have heard, but without noting, footsteps in another direction?"

"My Lord, I am quite assured that I did not; I have often since thought of that matter."

The other two keepers were then recalled by the Judge, and asked similar questions, to which they gave similar answers; and then Mr Solicitor declared that the case for the Crown was closed.

The Judge thereupon glanced ominously at the prisoner's counsel and attorney, who were instantly in anxious consultation, amidst the breathless silence of the court; being, up even to that critical moment, in direful perplexity whether or not they should hand in to the officer of the Court the account which the attorney had drawn up in writing, from the prisoner's lips, of the affair, as he protested, without ever varying, that it had happened. Just as they had determined in the negative, but with a dreadful sense of responsibility, behold! their client, as if unable to resist a sudden impulse, turned to the jury, and spoke in substance thus, with a voice at first somewhat smothered, but presently becoming clear:—

"Gentlemen,—With my Lord's permission to speak, I own that I have done wrong, and meant to do wrong, but no murder; and I do not wonder why I am now here, for truly appearances be against me terribly. Yet of this murder which has been done, I am every whit as innocent as any of you, or his lordship there; nor do I know who did it, nor why. But I was in the wood at the time when that most cruel deed was done, and was (may God forgive me!) lying in wait to punish one who had hurt and deceived me grievously; and that was the man whom I took yonder stick to cudgel soundly, and teach him thereby how to lay a cruel snare for one whose wife (as I told him mine was) lay nearly at death's door for lack of nourishment. He spoke kindly to me as we were

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hedging, and so afterwards did the man that came as witness against me before the magistrate — those two agreeing, doubtless, to have between them what I might have to pay. I cannot but say I knew I had gone against the law therein, but had never done aught like it before, though many a time I might. And truly, had I on that terrible night caught them, or either of them—as I had heard they might chance to be there—God knoweth how much greater mischief I might have done than I had intended. But to say I killed Lord Alkmond is quite contrary to God's truth. I, hearing footsteps at some distance, and thinking only of Hundle, crept onward; and some time after, they getting fainter, I went on faster, and"—a visible tremor came over him—"right across my path lay a body, and I thought the arm moved a little. The fright I then felt may none of you ever know—God grant you may not! I saw who it was—the poor young Lord, wrapped in a great-coat. I tried to lift him, and just then heard steps coming another way. 'Ho,' quoth I, within myself, 'they will say that I did this—having come out after hares again,' as I misgave me it would be supposed; and though at first I was minded to shout for help, I feared, for appearance's sake; and, knowing that I had not done the cruel deed, and hearing steps coming nearer, and then voices speaking, as hath been truly told you to-day, I ran quicker, and was followed, and fired at, ay, as though I had been a wild beast: and here am I this day to answer before you for a murder which I never committed, nor dreamt of. There never passed a word, good or ill, between the poor young Lord and me, in our lives; nor, as God doth know, had I malice, or cause for malice, against him. Now, gentlemen, I hope you believe all this—and may God put it into your hearts to do so, for it is nothing but the truth; and there is one, I think, that could say"—he paused, his eyes filled with tears, and he seemed choked. After a while he resumed—"I mean, my old father; were he here (but truly glad I am that he is not), he would testify that he hath never known falsehood come from my lips. And this is all that I can plead for my poor life, now in danger."

Here his counsel got up, and whispered hastily to him.

"Ay, ay, my Lord," continued the prisoner, "that Mr Oxley hath put a wrong colour on my words; and much I fear he hath done it knowingly, for he doth not love me, nor mine. The words that I said when I was before the justice for the hare, were not what have here, this day, been told you by Mr Oxley; but I will own I did say then to myself, as indeed I had intended, that it should go hard with them that had brought me where I was, by the cruel means of trapping me with that hare; and those other words that he hath spoken of I never said at all, nor any like them, that I can remember, at any time."

At this moment the prisoner suddenly fell heavily on the floor, overcome with exhaustion both of mind and body (which was much weakened by illness), rendering him for a short time insensible. This greatly startled and moved all present. After a while, he was assisted from court, and given some refreshment; and on a message from the Judge being sent, to know if he were able and ready to come back, he returned, shortly afterwards, looking very ill, leaning between two gaolers, and sat down on a stool, which had been placed for him in the dock, by order of the Judge. Then were called witnesses to speak to his good character, beginning with Mr Hylton, whose words, and hearty emphatic manner of uttering them, and his amiable look and reverend appearance, aided by the high character he bore, evidently produced a great impression in the prisoner's favour. For no mortal man could more have been said than Mr Hylton said, as clergyman and magistrate, for Ayliffe, who sobbed violently while his affectionate and zealous witness was speaking.

Then the Chief Justice turned towards the Jury, and all they, with anxious faces towards him. In a twinkling no

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earthly sound was audible, but his clear, distinct voice, which thus began:—

"Gentlemen of the Jury, there be many cases in which we are forced to some judgment or other, on the question of *true*, or *false:* though lamenting, with just cause that we have but scanty means for forming such judgment. But in this world it ever will be so, judging, as we must, with imperfect faculties, and concerning matters the knowledge whereof, as (observe you!) constantly happens in crimes, is studiously impeded, or sought to be impeded, by those who have done such crimes. Seeing, then, that our judgment may be wrong, and, as in this case, may be followed by consequences which cannot be remedied by man — and yet that we *must* form a judgment one way or another, or fail of doing our duty to both God and man — it behoves us solemnly and carefully to do our uttermost, as though our own lives were at stake; and, devoutly asking God's assistance in doing so, to leave the result with His mercy, wisdom, and justice. Now, gentlemen, in this case, forget, for a very little while, that life depends on the judgment which you are to pronounce; but only, by-and-by to remember it the more distinctly and religiously. Did this man at the bar slay the late Lord Alkmond? is your first question; and the only other is—Did he do it with malice aforethought? for if he did, then has he done murder, and your verdict must needs be *Guilty*. He says before you to-day, that he did not kill the Lord Alkmond at all. If you verily believe that he did not, nor was by, counselling and assisting those who did, why, there ends the matter, and he is Not guilty. But did he do the act with which he is charged? No one but Almighty God above, and the prisoner himself, can, as far as we seem able this day to see, absolutely *know* whether the prisoner did, as though you had yourself seen him do it; for even if he had never so solemnly told you that he did, yet that telling would not be such absolute *knowledge*, but, as I may say, next door to it. And so is it, in reason, observe you well, if facts be proved before you, which, be they few or many, point only one way; unless, indeed, all sense and reason are to be disregarded and outraged. Look, then, to what are proved, to your satisfaction, to be FACTS; and also forget not that which the prisoner himself has this day voluntarily told you. That some one did this foul murder is past dispute — the wound proved not being of such a nature that it could possibly have been inflicted by the Lord Alkmond himself. The prisoner owns himself to have been with the body at the time closely after that when the deed must, by all accounts, have deen done, nay, while the deceased yet lived — for the prisoner tells you that he thought he saw the arm of Lord Alkmond move — and yet says that he knows nothing whatever of the matter, though he ran away—and bloody—and with a bloody stick, such as, it is sworn before you, might have done the murder. If these be really *facts*, are they not such as point one way only, according to the expression of my Lord Coke, which was read rightly to you by Mr Solicitor? There is, as you see, no suggestion this day concerning any other who might have done the deed. But the prisoner himself does admit that he went whither he had no right to go; and, in doing that, trespassed secretly by night on the land of another, for a malicious and revengeful purpose, armed with that dangerous weapon which you have seen, and is now here — which purpose was, privily to lay wait for one who, he says, had wronged him; and he says himself that he might, in his anger, possibly have gone further with this unlawful and felonious assault than he had intended when he began it. Now, gentlemen, do you think, according to the best of your judgment upon these facts, that the prisoner may have unhappily lit suddenly upon Lord Alkmond, and in the darkness, and the haste of his angered temper, mistaken him for the man for whom he was

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lying in wait, and under that mistake slain him; and, hearing voices and footsteps, fled for it?" The Chief Justice paused, and the jury were evidently uneasy, gazing on him very intently.

"If that were so," continued the Judge, "then is the prisoner at the bar before you as guilty of the murder of Lord Alkmond as if he had intended to kill Lord Alkmond—that is the law, beyond all possible doubt; and your verdict must in such case be guilty, founded on facts proved, and the prisoner's own admissions. That, I tell you again, is the clear law of England, which you must, on your oaths, abide by."

The prisoner here made violent efforts to rise and speak, but was prevailed on by those beside him, and beneath him, to remain silent, while this frightful possibility against him was being put to the jury. The man most agitated at this time, next to the prisoner, was Mr Hylton.

"Your first question, gentlemen, as I have told you," proceeded the Chief Justice, "is, Did the prisoner kill Lord Alkmond? And methinks it may not be ill for you to ask yourselves, If it were not the prisoner, who could it have been? Do you, in your sound discretion, verily, on your oaths, believe that it was not the prisoner? You may so believe, if you credit what he has said here to-day, having, look you, due regard to what is otherwise proved against him and the probabilities of the case. But have you, gentlemen, in your souls, and on your consciences, so much uncertainty on the matter that you cannot bring yourselves to say the prisoner struck the blow, or (which is the same thing in law) was present counselling or assisting those who did? Then has the Crown failed to bring before you evidence sufficient to prove the case which they undertook to prove. But beware, gentlemen (as 'tis my duty to warn you), of being led away from proved facts, by speculation and conjecture, which are mere Will-o'-the-wisps, as I may say, if far-fetched and fanciful; and also take care not to be drawn from your duty by thoughts of the cruelty or meanness which the prisoner charges (for aught we know, truly) on him whom he owns that he went to injure. And as for what has been sworn by Mr Oxley, my Lord Milverstoke's local agent, and seemingly a reputable person, going to show malice of the prisoner beforehand against Lord Alkmond, why consider whether you believe that this gentleman really heard the very words which he swears he heard the prisoner use. If such words were spoken, as are told us to-day, they go some little way to show deliberate malice towards the Lord Milverstoke and his family generally, —but Mr Oxley may be mistaken after all, or (which God forbid) may have had such horrid wickedness as to colour, invent, or pervert, advisedly against the prisoner. You will also, though I trust it may be needless to mention such a thing, think nothing whatever of the interest with which this trial may have been looked forward to outside, or be listened to in this place to-day; but think you only of your being on your solemn oaths before Almighty God, and judging as fearlessly and justly as though the prisoner and the late Lord Alkmond had changed places—as though the prisoner had been murdered, and Lord Alkmond were here to answer for it. Consider the case, then, gentlemen, under the pressure and sanction of your oaths, according to proved facts, and plain probabilities, such as would guide you in important affairs of your own. Say — Did the Lord Alkmond kill himself? Or are you, after all that you have heard, totally in the dark? Can you form no reasonable opinion on the matter? If that be so, why you must needs say—Not guilty. Or did Lord Alkmond and the prisoner contend together, so as to make the killing him manslaughter? But of this there is no pretence or suggestion whatever. Then did the prisoner strike the fatal blow, whether knowing the person to be Lord Alkmond, or mistaking him for some one

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else whom he intended to kill or maim? In either of these last two cases you must say—*Guilty*. But if you think that the prisoner neither struck the blow, nor counselled nor assisted those who did—knowing nothing, indeed (as he hath alleged), about the matter—and if you believe that what he has said before you this day is the pure truth, then you must say that he is *Not Guilty*. And now, gentlemen, consider the verdict which you shall pronounce; and may God enlighten and guide your minds in discharging the solemn duty which is this day cast upon you."

On this, a bailiff was thus sworn publicly,—

"You do swear, that you will keep this jury without meat, drink, fire, or candle, in some quiet and convenient place; that you will suffer none to speak to them, nor any of them; neither speak to them, nor any of them yourself, without leave of the Court, except to ask them whether they have agreed on their verdict.—So help you God!"

Slowly then arose the twelve from their seats; and, following the bailiff to their private room, passed on to it, scarcely one of them looking at the prisoner, within a few yards of whom they walked on their gloomy errand; nor did he look at them, but seemed faint and exhausted—which the Judge observing, gave him leave to retire, till the jury should have returned with their verdict.

Then Mr Hylton withdrew for a moment to the room, the key of which he had with him, where he had left old Ayliffe, and whom, on entering, he found staring towards the door with mute terror.

"I bring no news, Adam—the case is not over yet," said Mr Hylton quickly, but with a heavy sigh, and a face of fearful gloom.

After in vain attempting to make the old man take any nourishment, Mr Hylton returned to Court, almost trembling at the bare thought of a sudden knock at the door announcing the return of the jury, while he was absent with the prisoner's father, on whom a sudden shock might have fatal effects. On re-entering the Court, he found the Judge sitting with a solemn countenance, having spoken to no one since the jury had retired, but appearing absorbed in his own thoughts. What a position, indeed, was his! If the jury should find the prisoner guilty, that judge would have to assume the dismal emblem of the death-doom, and from his lips must fall upon the prisoner's ears the blighting accents which would extinguish life and all earthly hope!

Mr Hylton permitted another to occupy his seat, he standing near the door in a state of sickening anxiety, in order that, whatever should be the verdict, he might be able to enter, with a little preparation and calmness, the room where the old man was, at the door of which Mr Hylton had a servant stationed, to prevent any sudden noise or knocking. At length the low general whispering which had been going on in Court, for upwards of an hour and a half, was arrested by the sound of knocking at the jury-room door; and, while all voices were hushed, few faces were there which did not then change colour, few hearts which did not throb thickly and fast.

"Put the prisoner to the bar," said the officer of the Court; and, before the first juryman had re-entered the jury-box, the unhappy prisoner came slowly forward from beneath the prison, to the bar, and stood there with much firmness, but his face manifestly flushed.

Oh, who could tell the appalling agony which he had to endure while the twelve jurymen's names were being slowly called over, they answering one by one, all looking either on the floor, or away from the prisoner!

The last name having been called over,—

"Adam Ayliffe," said the officer, "hold up thy hand!"

The prisoner did so, and a very awful silence ensued, while the officer proceeded to say to the jury,

"Gentlemen of the jury, have ye agreed upon your verdict? Who shall say for you? Ye shall speak by your foreman. Do ye say that the pri-

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sooner at the bar is guilty of the felony and murder with which he stands charged, or not guilty?"

"GUILTY," said the foreman in a low tone—and those who were watching the prisoner observed the colour fly rapidly from his face, like breath from a glass, leaving his countenance of a corpse-like hue. But he stood firmly. His lips appeared to move, and he spoke—no one, however, hearing him but the two jailors next to him, who said afterwards that his words were,

"Now am I murdered, who never did murder any one!"

"Hearken to your verdict as the Court records it!" said the clerk of assize (as soon as the verdict had been pronounced), writing the fatal "Guilty" on the indictment. "Ye say that the prisoner at the bar, Adam Ayliffe, is guilty of the felony and murder whereof he stands indicted: that is your verdict, and so ye say all."

There was a moment's thrilling silence.

"Call upon him!" said the Judge, gazing solemnly at the prisoner, while the officer thus called on him to hear judgment, or show why it ought not to be passed

"Adam Ayliffe, hold up thy hand. Thou hast been indicted of felony and murder; thou wast thereupon arraigned, and didst plead thereto Not guilty, and for thy trial didst put thyself upon God and thy country, which country hath found thee Guilty. What hast thou now to say why the Court should not give thee judgment upon that conviction, to die according to law?"

A momentary pause ensued—this being the time for the prisoner's counsel to take any objection in law to the sufficiency of the indictment, so as to arrest the judgment—but the prisoner's counsel spoke not, nor moved, looking down in silence. Then the Judge drew from beneath his desk a black velvet cap, and placed it deliberately upon his head, a sigh or sob being audible throughout the Court while he did so.

Then rose the crier, and said in a loud voice,—

"O yez! O yez! O yez! My Lords the King's Justices do strictly charge and command all manner of persons to keep silence, while sentence of death is passing against the prisoner at the bar, upon pain of imprisonment!"

The prisoner stood staring with ashy cheek and glazed eye, at the Judge, while the following words were being uttered, the import of which was, perhaps, at that fearful moment, only imperfectly apprehended by him to whom they were addressed, with a calmness and deliberation that were appalling.

"Adam Ayliffe, the word has just been spoken which has severed you from this world, and from life. You stand there convicted of a most foul and cruel murder, upon a young nobleman, in the very heyday of happiness, prosperity, and grandeur, and, on your own showing, utterly unoffending against you. Whether there be any truth whatever in that which you have this day said in your defence, I know not: a jury of twelve honest men here, whose present manifest agitation shows the pain with which they have discharged a sacred duty, have rejected your story, and found that you did actually commit this awful crime; and have said so, without venturing to speak of recommending you to mercy. I am bound to tell you that I agree with their verdict entirely; and all intelligent persons who hear me, are now probably regarding you as a justly convicted murderer. Indeed, what enormous offences must go unpunished, if evidence so clear as that given this day in your case were held not sufficient to bring you to conviction! An earthly tribunal has endeavoured to do its duty, and is consoled, in its anxiety, by reflecting on the overpowering strength of the evidence which has been brought before it. Get you, unhappy, misguided man, victim of your own guilty and headlong passions! to your knees, without one moment's delay, to prepare, after quitting this earthly, for your speedy appearance before a heavenly, tribunal. I will not waste the few precious, most inestimably precious, hours which yet remain to you, by doing more than conjuring you to address yourself devout-

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ly to Him who, and who alone, is able to save you from the bitter pains of eternal death. Through your blessed Redeemer, who died the just for the unjust, and ever liveth to make intercession for you, and in reliance on his merits, beseech and implore the pardon and mercy of your offended God! Alas! all that now remains for me to do, as your earthly judge, is to declare and pronounce upon you the sentence of the law: which sentence is, that you, Adam Ayliffe, be taken back to the place whence you came; and thence, on Monday now next, to the place of public execution, and there be hanged by the neck until you be dead: and that afterwards your body be dissected and anatomised.—And the Lord have mercy on your soul."

"Amen!" solemnly cried the Chaplain, who, on the jury's pronouncing their verdict, had silently entered the Court, in his full canonicals, and stood a little behind the Judge's seat, only long enough to pronounce that word, and then withdrew.

The wretched prisoner moved not, nor spoke, when the Judge had concluded; and, apparently mechanically, turned round and accompanied the two gaolers who stood beside him, and who, putting his arms within theirs, gently led him away from amidst the sea of solemn faces around him, to the cell, which, within a few short hours, he would have to quit, only to appear before a far greater assemblage, on a still more awful occasion, with what decorum and firmness he might.

CHAPTER VI.

As soon as Mr Hylton had heard the death-dooming word uttered by the foreman of the jury, he instantly withdrew; and breathing a hurried inward prayer on behalf of the prisoner, and his afflicted father, gently opened the door of the room where he was awaiting the dreadful issue; and, with as much composure as he could command, sat down beside the old man, who moved not as Mr Hylton entered, but remained with his face buried in his hands, which were supported by his knees. For some moments Mr Hylton spoke not, scarce knowing how to break the blighting intelligence.

"Adam, my friend, it is over!" said he, gently taking one of the old man's hands, and grasping it within his own. Ayliffe looked slowly and fearfully in Mr Hylton's face, and read his son's doom written in every troubled feature. He tried, but in vain, to speak: his lips moved without uttering any sound, and he sunk from his chair on his knees, his hands clasped before him, and his haggard face inclined towards the ground.

"God, in whom you have trusted, my dear troubled friend, support you in this hour of darkness!" said Mr Hylton.

"Pray!—help—help me to pray!" gasped the old man faintly; on which Mr Hylton knelt beside him saying—

"God be merciful unto thee, and bless thee, and lift up the light of his countenance upon thee! Be Thou a very present help in time of trouble, unto this thy servant, who trusteth in thee!"

While they were thus engaged, the Lord Chief Justice suddenly stood for a few seconds before them, having, in haste, mistaken the room for his own, which adjoined that assigned to old Ayliffe. After a moment's pause, he silently retired, having recognised the benevolent features of Mr Hylton, with whose face he had been much

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struck, as he spoke on behalf of the prisoner. The Chief Justice had been aware of the prisoner's father having been in attendance all day in some adjoining apartment, and saw at a glance how the matter was. On entering his own room, the Judge was so much affected with what he had thus accidentally witnessed, that he sate in silence, and without unrobing, for a considerable time.

When Mr Hylton had uttered a few more sentences of Scripture, with great fervency, the old man's tears began to fall, and he heaved a long, deep-drawn sigh.

At length, "I scarce know where I am," said he faintly; "yet—I have had help, but for which surely I must have died! I thank thee, sir, for all thy goodness to a poor heart-blighted old man!" he whispered, slowly rising from his knees, with Mr Hylton's assistance, and sitting down trembling from head to foot; "I—dare—not—ask," he stammered; "thy terrible face tells me—all is over with him!"

"I cannot say that it is not so!" said Mr Hylton.

"Oh! Adam, Adam, my son! would thou hadst never been born!" exclaimed the old man, lamentably. "Would I were dust, as is thy poor mother! Oh, my Sarah! my Sarah!" He placed his hands before his eyes, and the tears trickled down beneath them.

"He hath not to live beyond Monday morning!" said he, after a long pause, with a sudden affrighted look at Mr Hylton, who shook his head in silence.

The old man groaned, and pressed his hand over his heart, as though it were bursting.

"What shall I—what can I say to comfort you, Adam?" said Mr Hylton—"except, that there is one never-failing source of succour, as you know well, both for you, and for your son, and for all mankind!"

"Oh, my son! my son!—let me go to my poor son while yet he lives!" said Ayliffe mournfully, and, taking his stick and hat, essayed tremulously to move towards the door.

"Stay here, Ayliffe, while I go and see whether, by the rules of this place, you may be admitted to see him—that is, so soon after what has happened. Consider, too, what he has had to go through this day, and that his health has besides been somewhat shattered of late—as well, poor soul! it might be."

Having received a promise from Ayliffe to remain in the room till his return, Mr Hylton withdrew, and found no difficulty in obtaining written leave from the under-sheriff for immediate access to the wretched convict, who, being thenceforth allowed only bread and water, had been removed from the bar of the Court to the condemned cell; through the open door of which Mr Hylton saw, as he approached, three turnkeys fastening upon him heavy irons, the chaplain standing in his robes beside him, and holding in his hand a cup of water, which he had in vain brought several times to the closed lips of the condemned man.

This dreadful scene greaty agitated Mr Hylton; who stood for a moment, at a little distance, to regain some measure of self-possession.

"Come, my man, take the cup of water the parson offers thee!" said the head turnkey, kindly clapping his hand roughly on the prisoner's shoulder.

Ayliffe started, looked with glazed eye at the turnkey, breathing heavily through his nostrils, his lips remaining spasmodically closed. Mr Hylton hereupon entered, very pale.

"Adam, my poor friend, God be with you!" said he, with a faltering voice, taking the prisoner's hand.

Ayliffe suddenly rose from his seat, but sunk down, his irons being connected to a strong staple in the floor. "I am stifled!" he gasped, his breast heaving fearfully. "This is a grave!" he added, looking, his features distorted with horror, round the narrow cell in which he found himself. "Open the door—I cannot breathe!"

"Adam, if you have not forgotten one who ever loved you!" said Mr Hylton, taking the cup of water from

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the chaplain, and bringing it to Ayliffe's lips, "drink this water from my hand!"

But the prisoner turned aside, convulsively gasping, "I choke! I choke!"

At length, however, on the persevering entreaty of Mr Hylton, he greedily swallowed some of the water; and then, as if for the first time noticing the robed figure of the chaplain, stammered, with a ghastly stare, "Who—who are you?"

On the suggestion of Mr Hylton, the chaplain withdrew, as also did the turnkeys, closing the door behind them; and then Mr Hylton was alone with the condemned. For some time his solemn admonitions were lost upon Ayliffe; whose first connected words were—

"The curse of God be on them that have condemned the innocent for the guilty—ay, a *curse!*" he added, almost gnashing his teeth.

"Adam!" said Mr Hylton, "you are too near the immediate presence of the judgment-seat of the Eternal, to be indulging in these unholy thoughts!"

The condemned man glared at him wildly, evidently making a mighty effort to keep silent.

"Your father is waiting to see you—heart-broken, yet bowing in reverent submission before God; but, so long as you cherish such resentful feelings, I cannot bring him to this cell."

Mr Hylton saw a change coming over his miserable companion, who seemed terribly agitated, and about to weep.

"Does not your heart yearn after the sight of that saintly father of yours?" continued Mr Hylton, gently.

The son raised his hand to his eyes, sighed heavily, and shook his head bitterly.

"God is softening your heart, Adam," said Mr Hylton, his voice faltering with his own strong emotions; "yield to His holy influences! From Him hath come all this that has happened to you! Oh! let not Satan now steel your heart, and close your ears, that he may have you presently his for ever! Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right? Kneel down with me, my fellow-sinner, and let us humble ourselves before God, and beseech his forgiveness and support!"

The prisoner's tears flowed fast; and, sobbing convulsively, he permitted himself to be inclined gently on his knees! Mr Hylton uttered a short, solemn, and fervent prayer, in which Ayliffe audibly joined; and presently rising, assisted by Mr Hylton, began to exhibit an approach towards composure, Mr Hylton speaking to him gently and soothingly.

"You have much work to do, Adam, and little time to do it in! Will you listen to me for a moment?"

The convict sadly bowed his head, and grasped the hand of Mr Hylton in silence.

"Do you from your heart forgive all those who you believe may have injured you, as you would be yourself forgiven by God?"

Ayliffe paused. "No—not yet! I cannot truly say I do!—but, with God's help, I will try."

"He is at this moment helping you, in saying these last pious words of yours! Within a few hours, Adam, how plainly may you see the justice, ay, and even the mercy and wisdom of all that now appears so greatly to the contrary! Prepare!—prepare, Adam, to meet your God! Confess your sins, if you would have them forgiven! Oh, how many have they been! How many things have you done during your life, that will not now bear examination! yet all MUST be examined, and judged hereafter! How much have you omitted to do, that ought to have been done!—and all these things are noted against you, by an Eye that sleepeth not! And in this very matter—why, Adam! rouse yourself—stir up your soul within you! —reflect!—consider!—what have you not confessed this day in open Court, before your earthly judge—before all mankind? What, but the deadly malignity and revenge that you had long cherished in your heart against your enemy!—whom the Gospel had told

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you to forgive!—but whom *you*—oh, Adam! went, under a hellish impulse, secretly to be revenged on! If God should enter into judgment against you, what have you to say? Look at the very root of this matter: concerning the hare which (small cause of so much evil!) led to all this. Did you not then stifle your conscience, which condemned you, when first you were tempted to do wrong? Oh, where was then your Bible? Where were your father's warnings! where were my humble teachings? Had you but resisted at the first—at the very first—would you now have been here, Adam? And was not Providence opening for you, through my unworthy exertions, a way for you out of your troubles? Think, Adam, of the steps by which you have gone wrong, and done deliberate wickedness, and *brought yourself directly hither!* I say not this, Adam, believe me, to chide and trouble you in so awful a moment as this; but am only striving to set you right with your conscience, that when I am gone, and before we meet again on earth, and while your precious moments ebb fast away,"—here Mr Hylton was greatly moved, and paused for some moments,—"you may think of your sins, and humble yourself under the mighty hand of God, and give ear to no temptings of the fiend who would seduce and delude you!"

Ayliffe clasped his hands together, and gazing upwards, said tremulously, "I do confess my many and grievous sins, O God! and more now they seem than they ever seemed before!"

"The world in which you still, for a little, live," continued Mr Hylton, "is fading fast from before your eyes, Adam! It passeth away! It perisheth! From you, within a few hours, does it disappear, and is only somewhat more slowly vanishing from me, and from all living! Hither were we sent for trial only, and but for a brief space!—Then return we to Him who sent us, who is Eternal, Omnipotent, Omniscient, Just, and Merciful; and who will assuredly, as he hath distinctly told us, render to every man according to his deeds!"

Mr Hylton uttered all this with thrilling solemnity; and, as he ceased, the condemned man sunk again on his knees, in an attitude of profound devotion. Thus he remained for some minutes, neither he nor Mr Hylton speaking. At length Ayliffe rose slowly, and resumed his seat.

"Adam," said Mr Hylton, "let me ask you a great question—one that I will not ask a second time, be your answer what it may. Tell me, who am a minister of that God before whom you are so soon to appear, and now that all earthly hope is over—are you innocent or guilty of the crime for which you are to die?"

The condemned man calmly elevated his hands and his eyes towards heaven, and with solemn firmness replied, "God knoweth that I am as innocent as the child that hath not been born; and may He reconcile me to die for that which I never did, nor know who did, nor why it was done. May I, before I depart, cease to think it hard that the innocent should die for the guilty!"

Mr Hylton gazed at him in troubled silence.

"Do you believe, sir, that I am innocent of this murder?" Ayliffe suddenly inquired, turning to Mr Hylton a face that wore an awful expression—having no anger or sternness in it, but being, in a manner, radiant with truth from heaven, which seemed to lighten into the mind of Mr Hylton; who replied—

"As I live, Adam Ayliffe, I do!"

"I am! I am! and, now that you believe me, I feel a great change here," he continued, raising his manacled hands to his breast,—"I feel free and light; and that I may die in full piety, truth, and hope, and be forgiven all my many sins, for His sake, who died the just for the unjust!"

"See, Adam, what peace may come suddenly from Heaven, into so dismal a cell as this!"

"It may!—it hath! Yet"—he paused—"God grant that, when I am left alone, all my evil thoughts and impiety do not return!"

"No, they will not, if you be con-

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tinual in your supplications, and strenuous in faith! But remember, Adam, remember!—remember! time is short! Thrice only will the sun rise upon you!"

"I know it, sir! I know it! and very terrible is it to feel and to know it! But"—he became suddenly agitated—"there is yet a question I would ask—yet I dare not."

"I know, Adam, what you mean," said Mr Hylton very piteously. "Alas! I fear me—but,—what think you, Adam? Do you wish her to stay in so sad a world after you?"

"The will of God be done! Is she—is my poor Sarah—is she gone?" He shook in every limb.

"No, Adam, she is not; but I must own, it may be that you will both meet sooner than you now think for. She lies trembling on the very verge of the grave. A breath might"—

"Oh, poor soul!—oh, dear Sarah!—oh, my own wife!" cried Ayliffe, dismally. "Mother of my child! must we never meet again on earth? And my child!—oh that thy mother had never borne thee to me!"

Mr Hylton bowed his head in silence, at this bitter outbreak, and his eyes overflowed with tears.

"Let her not know of my death, if she live afterwards, till she may, with God's blessing, bear it! And the old man—my poor father!—where is he?" suddenly inquired Ayliffe.

"He is in the prison, and hath been there all the day long, and now, doubtless, is wondering why I return not to perform my promise, and bring him to see you. Can you bear to meet him, Adam, if I get leave to bring him?" The prisoner groaned; and, after a long pause, said, sorrowfully—

"It cannot hurt me—but may it not kill him?"

"I hope and do trust not, Adam. He, like his son, has sought for succour from above! He knows, poor soul! the worst of what has happened, and I doubt not his coming may at first grieve, but directly afterwards it will greatly comfort you!"

With this, Mr Hylton quitted the cell, and, having obtained the requisite permission, returned, supporting on his arm the grief-worn father of the convict, even the gruff turnkey pitying him, as he passed silently along. He almost dropped to the earth at sight of the two turnkeys, standing with blunderbusses at the door of the cell in which lay his miserable son. They were about to search the old man before he entered; but the governor, having been appealed to, gave permission for him to be admitted into the cell after only a nominal search, provided Mr Hylton as a magistrate would stay in the cell during the whole of the interview—an undertaking which Mr Hylton gave with great reluctance, hoping to have been spared so sad a scene; for sad indeed, and heart-rending, it proved to be.

It lasted not long, however; for the limits of indulgence allowed by the prison rules to the condemned had already been nearly exceeded when Mr Hylton re-entered with the old man.

Oh! how great was the consolation afforded to father and son, by Mr Hylton's declaring his conviction that that son was really innocent of the barbarous and horrible crime for which he was nevertheless to die! Never had the father doubted of his son's innocence, from the moment of his solemn assertion of it, when first his father had seen him in the gaol. On Mr Hylton's mind this solemn asseveration of the prisoner had produced a profound impression—one painful and intolerable; for he himself, of course, as implicitly and absolutely believed that assertion as he had professed to the prisoner that he did. Fixed in such a belief, how awful appeared to him the insufficiency of all earthly modes of investigation, and administering justice, deliberate, impartial, unimpeachable even as had been that of the memorable day which was then closing. "Oh," thought Mr Hylton, "how, in this dim scene of action, we grope in the dark after truth, and *may* miss it, and *do* miss it, after all our best-directed efforts. And how fearful often, as in this case, the consequence of error!"

Mr Hylton had himself heard the

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whole of Ayliffe's trial; and felt that, had he been either judge or juryman, he could not possibly have come to any other conclusion, according to the evidence, than that the prisoner's guilt had been fully established that day in Court, and corroborated too, most powerfully, by his own voluntary acknowledgment! "But what," thought Mr Hylton, as he slowly conducted his aged heart-broken companion, from the gaol, to a small house where he had kindly engaged a room for him for a day or two, that he might be near his son during the few sad hours left him of life,—"what is to be done? What time is there for doing that which may be done? Here is Friday night — and on Monday he dies!"

Sitting down with old Ayliffe, as soon as they were alone, Mr Hylton, endeavouring to speak in such a guarded and desponding manner as should kindle no hopes which might be disappointed, engaged him in unrestrained conversation concerning what had been stated in Court by Mr Oxley, touching the alleged origin of both the Ayliffes' ill-will to the Earl and his family. With lively indignation did Mr Hylton hear of the insulting and oppressive conduct of Mr Oxley; and on being told, above all, of his outrageous allusion to the workhouse, as the destined resort of old Ayliffe, and of the scornful fury with which the condemned man had cast the offensive speaker out of the cottage, Mr Hylton was indeed confounded, on remembering Mr Oxley's statement to the Judge, that there never had been any ill-feeling or cause of dispute between him (Oxley) and the Ayliffes! This Mr Hylton mentioned to Ayliffe, who thereupon told him, that on Mr Oxley's coming to his legs again, after being jerked down by young Ayliffe, as has been described, old Ayliffe heard him say, with a venomous look towards young Ayliffe—"Ay, ay, Master Ayliffe! I owe thee a turn for this!"

As time was precious, and the evening was far advanced, Mr Hylton hurriedly took leave of his companion, promising, rather vaguely, to see him again as soon as possible. On his way to the inn where his horse was put up, a travelling carriage-and-four rolled rapidly by him; and, on inquiry, he found that it was that of the Lord Chief Justice, who, having finished the Assize, was thus already on his way to London. Mr Hylton rode round by Sir Henry Harrington's, on whom he called, and found him ill in bed; but, stating the urgency of his errand, Mr Hylton was admitted instantly to his room, and took down *verbatim* Sir Henry's account (signed by himself) of the expression which the condemned man had used on the occasion of his conviction for having had the hare in his possession; and that expression was precisely the one which Mr Hylton had written down in Court, and handed to the prisoner's counsel, but which had been, nevertheless, peremptorily denied by Mr Oxley.

"Here, then," thought Mr Hylton, as he urged on his horse rapidly homeward, "are two things—malice established in Oxley against the prisoner, and a false, or at least an erroneous, account given by the former of the words which had been used by the latter, as showing settled malice against Lord Milverstoke and his family. But, alas!" thought Mr Hylton, as he revolved the matter in his mind, "to what do these two things really amount? Does the fatally conclusive proof on which Ayliffe has been condemned depend on Mr Oxley? Suppose even all that he has said at the trial were struck out from the evidence, would not the glaring facts proved by the Crown, and admitted by the prisoner, remain?"—and Mr Hylton reflected on the fearful summing-up of the Judge, knowing not how to impugn any part of it. If this were indeed so, then must poor Ayliffe be left to his fate, and the innocent (as Mr Hylton believed him) die the shameful and horrible death of the murderer.

Thoughts like these greatly depressed Mr Hylton—exhausted, moreover, as he was with the agitation and excitement of that dismal day, during which he had scarcely tasted any refreshment.

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CHAPTER VII.

When within a mile of Milverstoke, he slackened his pace to give his horse a little breathing-time; and had hardly done so before he heard the sound of some one approaching on horseback a little to his right, evidently from the quarter where the barracks lay. As he passed the entrance of the by-road which led to them, he saw, on glancing aside, an orderly come trotting up at a brisk pace, and who was going to pass him (it being about nine o'clock, and dark). Suddenly, however, the soldier stopped his horse, saluted Mr Hylton, and said, "I ask your pardon, sir—are not you Parson Hylton, sir?"

"I am," said Mr Hylton, sufficiently surprised, reining up.

"Well, sir, I am the third man that has been ordered from the barracks within this two hours to your parsonage, sir—with a letter to you, sir, from Captain Lutteridge. I have it now, sir. Here it is," giving it to Mr Hylton; "but you cannot read it in the dark."

"I suppose, my man, you don't know what it is about?" inquired Mr Hylton amazedly.

"No, sir; I know nothing of the matter: my orders were only to take this letter, and bring an immediate answer, sir, if you were at home; and my two comrades that went before carried each this letter, and brought it back, as you were not at the parsonage, sir."

The barracks were at little more than a quarter of a mile's distance, so —"Go back, if you please," said Mr Hylton, "as quickly as you choose, and say that I follow you."

"Yes, sir," replied the man, and galloped back as fast as Mr Hylton could have desired—he followed pretty briskly, wondering much what urgent matter might be astir. Arrived at the barracks, he was forthwith shown into a private room, where two officers (one of them considerably older than the other, of a stern, matter-of-fact, soldierly appearance) joined him before he had had time to do more than open the letter which had been given him by the orderly. After a hasty but handsome apology for troubling him, and especially for the liberty which had been taken, without orders, by the orderly, in stopping him on his return home—

"It is known to us," said Captain Lutteridge, the elder of the two officers, "that you have great concern in the case which has been this day tried at the Assizes, concerning the murder of the late Lord Alkmond; and my friend here, Lieutenant Wylsden, who was present at the trial, has come back, telling us that the Judge said he thought it strange that Lord Alkmond should have gone out, as he truly did, into the woods on that night; and asked whether any one knew the cause."

"Sir," replied Mr Hylton, with sudden interest, "the Judge did say so; and in so saying, expressed that which I, and others, have often felt and talked about."

"Well, sir, I know little about it; but for aught I know, that little may have some bearing on the case of the man this day condemned for the murder. This, then, is all I have to say: I, do you see, sir, was at my Lord Milverstoke's on the night of the murder, dining there, and afterwards was at the ball, till it was suddenly broke up by the news of my Lord

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Alkmond's murder. Now, when we were all at dinner, naught happened; but some time afterwards, when my Lord Milverstoke and others had gone to the ball-room, Lord Alkmond and some few of us, principally officers, remained behind; and a certain one present chanced to speak of a subject which several immediately talked upon—but not Lord Alkmond, who seemed to become suddenly sad, and even troubled. I sat next to him, and I saw that he grew very much disturbed indeed as the talk went on; but why, I could neither know nor guess. He spoke to me of some matter altogether different, but I saw that he was listening, as though in spite of himself, to what the others were saying—especially when one of them, a nobleman, not now, I believe, in England, told us of a thing which had happened to him, or that he had heard of, I forget which. Then Lord Alkmond did, as I thought, grow suddenly far more troubled; and I, for politeness' sake, moved to go: so did the others, except two, who talked very earnestly together, still on the same subject. My Lord Alkmond bade us, with forced gaiety, go to the dancing, saying that he would before long rejoin us. I sportingly said 'No, come with us, my Lord.' 'By-and-by,' said his lordship; 'I have a small matter to do;' and so we parted, never again (as it proved) to meet alive. Now, this is all I know, reverend sir, and it may signify little, and yet may mean much. I, being a soldier, know not what bearing all this may have on law matters: but as the Judge, it seems, asked a question which, had I been there, I could have so far answered; and as the Judge said, so Lieutenant Wylsden tells me, that it was strange that on such an occasion my Lord Alkmond should go into the wood—why, I too say it was a little strange. The man that has been tried to-day is convicted, and will, I suppose most justly, die on Monday; therefore, sir, I have sent to tell you what you have now heard, but what you can make of it I know not."

These last pregnant words startled Mr Hylton out of a reverie into which he had fallen, while listening in silent amazement to Captain Lutteridge. "May I trouble you, so far, reverend sir," said the Captain, "as to ask whether you have seen the prisoner since his sentence?"

"I have," replied Mr Hylton, as if his mind were bent on something else.

"Does he stand firm? The Lieutenant here tells me he is a marvellous tall, well-built, and strong man, and would have made a fine trooper. Methinks I must have seen him about, some time or other, in these parts.

"What was that matter, sir, on which you gentlemen were speaking, at which the Lord Alkmond grew so troubled?" inquired Mr Hylton suddenly and anxiously.

"Why," quoth Captain Lutteridge, evidently taken quite aback by the question, "look you, sir—is it necessary or proper that I should say what passed, in confidential talk, at the table of my Lord Milverstoke? For I was the guest of his lordship; and we cannot, I reckon, talk elsewhere about anything there spoken of. How knew I what mischief I might do, or how grievously I might thereby hurt my hospitable host?"

"But I implore you, sir, consider that within little more than forty-eight hours an innocent man may be swinging on a gibbet; and what you have now told me may"—

Captain Lutteridge appeared quite nonplussed at this turn of the matter, it never having occurred to the frank and high-minded soldier that such a question was likely to be asked. Now it seemed to him to be directly contrary to good manners, and the rules of hospitality, that he should disclose anything which had taken place on an occasion of unrestrained private intercourse at his host's table; and that, too, relating to the son of that host, and under most afflicting and awful circumstances.

"I entreat—I earnestly implore of

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you to tell me, sir," said Mr Hylton, eagerly.

"Sir, you see, I never thought of this, nor did any of us, as we talked the matter over in our room there; so I am at a loss suddenly to answer you. Let me tell you, sir, that it seems certain to me that the thing can have no real bearing on the case of this murder. What could my Lord Alkmond, sir, have had to do with the man who has been this day tried for murdering him? Did he dine with us, sir, and hear what we said? And if he did, still it plainly could have signified nothing in such a case."

"Oh, forgive me, Captain—forgive me!" answered Mr Hylton, earnestly. "It may have every bearing—the most vital bearing, for aught you and I, at present, can know. You said, but a moment ago, most truly, gallant sir, that you, being an officer, knew not the bearing which the thing might have on law matters."

"Ay, I did then say so, but I never thought of the question which you would presently ask, sir"—Captain Lutteridge said this somewhat stiffly, looking rather angry. "And even though it had a bearing, sir, do you wish me, a gentleman and officer, to tell out of my host's doors what took place within, whether it be a matter great or little? Sir, you should not, being yourself a gentleman, stand upon your question."

"But I must, Captain; life is at stake: this poor man, I declare in the presence of Heaven, I believe to be quite innocent."

"Phew!" exclaimed the Captain, with an air of complete astonishment, and a touch of disdain too—"and that, reverend sir, after my Lord Chief Justice and a jury have found him guilty? Excuse me, sir, but who shall know better than they? Besides, the Lieutenant here tells us that your very innocent man confessed the deed in open Court. Did he not?" continued the Captain, sarcastically, turning to his brother officer.

"Yes; I say so, Captain—he did."

Mr Hylton eagerly interposed—"No! no! no!"

"I say he did, sir!" quoth the Lieutenant sternly; "or at least he did as good, or I had no ears or understanding—and so said also the Judge; I marked it well"—

"I assure you, Lieutenant"—commenced Mr Hylton, with a gesture of strenuous dissent.

"Why, look you, reverend sir," interrupted the Lieutenant, "did not the prisoner say plainly and loudly, that true it was he got the blood on his coat from my Lord Alkmond's body, and ran away from it, with a bloody bludgeon, for his life?"

"Yes; but he said also that he did not do the deed, and only feared he might be thought to have done it."

"And there, sir, I reckon, he lied," quoth the Lieutenant, warmly.

"Interfere between us, Captain, for the love of God, and for pity to man!" said Mr Hylton, appealing to Captain Lutteridge, who was a much older man than the Lieutenant, and during the latter's brief contention with Mr Hylton had stood looking at the fire, in a very thoughtful manner. On being appealed to—

"Be quiet, Mr Wylsden," said he quickly, and somewhat authoritatively, to the fiery subaltern; then turning to Mr Hylton, he continued,—"Sir, I have been thinking of this, and it seems to me at present a somewhat graver matter than it appeared to me just now; for, as you say, sir, this man will hang in forty-eight hours; and if he ought not to hang, that would (as I think) be unjust, though all the judges in the world said otherwise. I will speak to you in a few minutes, sir, wishing on this point to consult those who are within there."

With this the two officers hastily withdrew, leaving Mr Hylton in a state of no little excitement, impatience, and amazement. What extraordinary aspect was this miserable case about now to assume? What could this conversation have been about, that such a mystery was made of it? Troubled as he was, and serious as was the case, he saw clearly and

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respected the motives which influenced the simple-minded and honourable soldier, in demurring to give him the answer which he had besought. Presently, he heard loud and earnest talking in the mess-room adjoining.

"I say, nay!"—"'Tis monstrous!"—"'Tis unofficerlike!"—"Pity 'tis you named it, Captain!" were expressions which he could not avoid hearing. Anon all the voices dropped to a lower key, and he heard nothing for some minutes but hurried whispering; and at length his impatience, which was becoming quite intolerable, was relieved by Captain Lutteridge, who came in alone, shutting the door after him, and his flushed face showed that he had borne an active part in a somewhat keen discussion.

"Mr Hylton," said he courteously, "I have taken advice of several of my brother officers, and we all do think this a case of much difficulty, and some danger, and that may perhaps, for all I meant well, bring some discredit on me as being guilty of tattling or eaves-dropping, and that too on so sad and bloody a business as this in hand. What I have resolved to do is this, sir: I will first see my Lord Milverstoke and take his orders—that is, his pleasure on the matter—and if he object not"—

"Then is poor Adam Ayliffe sacrificed!" said Mr Hylton despairingly.

"How so, sir?" quickly asked the astonished officer. "Of course, sir, though my Lord Milverstoke should be greatly hurt"—

"No, no—I mean, sir, there is NO TIME for all this! It is now near ten o'clock, and if anything be done to get a respite even, I must go off to London by the coach passing through Milverstoke at midnight; and consider, dear Captain, how long it will be before I reach London—how much I have to do there, and must yet be back before Monday morning!"

"Sir, all that is doubtless so," said Captain Lutteridge, looking the picture of blank perplexity: he was rapid and decisive enough in military matters, but here he seemed for a while at fault. "Ho! without there!" he suddenly exclaimed; "saddle my horse and another instantly, and let Hickson, or some other of the men, be ready to accompany me without one moment's delay."

"Why this? why this, Captain?" inquired Mr Hylton.

"Sir, I am going to my Lord Milverstoke's, and if he grant me leave to tell you what you wish to know, I will follow you on to London, if I gallop all the way on horseback."

"Once more, sir, let me tell you how I honour you for your high-mindedness; but will you not act in this awful dilemma on your own judgment, and let me quit for London immediately with a somewhat lighter heart?"

"No, sir, not if I die for it, till I have seen my Lord Milverstoke."

Mr Hylton sighed heavily. "Do you know his lordship?"

"Not intimately; only as an hospitable nobleman, who entertained us all at a most princely banquet."

"But I know his temper and character well, Captain—haughty, stern, inflexible; and in this matter, above all others"—

"I care not," said Captain Lutteridge proudly, "for his haughtiness, if he were fifty Lords Milverstoke! I will see him and take his wishes on the subject, and, if need be, struggle for his consent. No man shall hang unjustly, if I can help it. But look you, Mr Hylton, upon my word and honour, I think nothing will come of all this; and I fear, when I may have disturbed and grieved, and it may be angered Lord Milverstoke, the matter that I may be permitted to tell, will signify little or nothing: I cannot see how it does, I assure you." Here the servant announced the horses; and hastily bidding adieu to Mr Hylton, on whom he promised to call in returning from the Castle, and, if Mr Hylton had gone to London, follow after him post-haste, if need might be—but if Lord Milverstoke proved inexorable, of course Captain Lutteridge would take no further steps—off galloped the Captain, and his man, at top speed, followed at a more moderate, but still

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a quick pace, by Mr Hylton. If what had just taken place at the barracks appeared strange, however unsatisfactory and tantalising, there awaited him at home, presently, intelligence still more so, and calculated to invest the case in which he had interested himself with real mystery. When he was about to dismount at the parsonage door, behold Mrs Hylton, unable to restrain her impatience, rushed forward to meet him; and before he could give his horse into the hands of the old gardener, who also had been for the last two hours anxiously looking out for him, and even before Mrs Hylton could speak to him about the dismal result of the trial, she put an open letter into his hand, saying—

"There, dearest! read it, read it!" Shortly after his quitting the parsonage in the morning, Mrs Hylton had also gone, pursuant to a previous arrangement with him, to the infirmary, which was at about five miles' distance, to be present with the unfortunate wife of the man who was to be that day tried for his life. Some three hours after the parsonage had thus been deserted for the day, the post came in, bringing a letter addressed to Mr Hylton, and marked outside "post-haste." The gardener had accompanied Mrs Hylton, and only the old housekeeper and a servant girl were left in the house. On Mrs Hylton's return, about six o'clock in the evening, this letter caught her eye, and having opened it in consequence of the words "post-haste," guess the feelings with which she read as follows:—

"Rectory, Midgecombe, 28th *March*.

"Dear Mr Hylton,

"In my husband's absence, on an expedition in which I am sure you would take an interest, seeing it is to preach a charity sermon on behalf of a lying-in society about to be founded, and of which our bishop highly approves, and has invited my husband to officiate on this occasion, I have opened several letters which came for him yesterday and to-day, and one of them appears to have come from some place on the French coast, and relates to that horrid murder of poor Lord Alkmond, which is to be tried (I think my husband said) at the close of the Assizes for your county. I do not know the particulars of the case, but this letter seems written by some one who has lived in this parish, and knows my husband—and says, in effect, that the man that wrote it is a mate in a small coasting vessel; and having seen a country paper, telling about the murder of Lord Alkmond, recollects one of their men being in a boat on the very night it happened, his vessel being at a couple of miles' distance, waiting for this man to return from some errand to the shore. He says it was nearly opposite Milverstoke Castle, and he recollects hearing guns fired in the wood, and, immediately before or afterwards, he saw one, or it might be two persons, running very quickly along the shore. He says the sailor recollects it, because he supposed 'twas some poaching business. The writer says he looks forward to being in England very soon, after they leave Dunkirk, from which place the letter seems written. As the man who is accused is unfortunately a parishioner of yours, and doubtless you take an interest in the case, I thought it right to tell you of this curious letter, which I would have sent, but that I expect my husband home hourly, and thought it better to keep the letter till he comes. — With best remembrances to Mrs Hylton (how is she in this bitter cold weather?) I am, dear Mr Hylton, yours sincerely,

"Fanny Merton.

"P.S.—The man's name is 'Jevons, or some such name (but horridly written), and my maid says she recollects that there was a young fellow of that name near us some years ago, and thinks he went to sea. By the way, he says something about a note in the log-book."

The letter almost fell from Mr Hylton's hands by the time that he had breathlessly read it over; and he looked so harassed and confounded that

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his good wife, who had a world of questions to ask him, slipped out of the room into an adjoining one, where preparations for supper had been going on, and brought him a glass of wine, which he drank from her hands almost mechanically.

"If we had had this letter at the trial to-day!" he exclaimed.

"Sure, my dear, I have not done wrong? I never saw it till I came back this evening."

"No, my dear Mary, how can you suppose that I think so? This is a most extraordinary accident — if, indeed, there *be* such a thing as accident."

"But poor Ayliffe"—she interposed, anxiously.

He shook his head. "The worst has happened. He is condemned to death, and is left for execution on Monday morning; the Judge made it an awfully clear case of guilt! but I have been with poor Ayliffe since, and verily believe him as innocent of it as you or I. How is his poor wife? Did she know what was going on?"

"No; the doctor had taken care, for fear of accidents, to give her some sleeping medicine, and she has dozed all day long."

"Mary!" said Mr Hylton, suddenly, "I start for London by the coach to-night. I will go to the Secretary of State's about this miserable victim of mistake!"

"Why, the coach will be here in three-quarters of an hour's time!"

"Put me up, dearest, a change of linen at once, to be ready"—

"But get your supper, first, surely, Henry! You will be fainting for mere want of food!"

Having hastily swallowed a little refreshment, he went out to borrow ten pounds from his church-warden, who lived at a neighbouring farm-house (not, himself, having sufficient money by him). Having obtained the necessary supplies, and made what hasty arrangements the time admitted of, especially in respect of his Sunday duty, which gave him great anxiety, lest there should be no one to do it, owing to this hurried movement of his, he carefully placed in his pocket-book the all-important letter above mentioned, also the memorandum signed by Sir Henry Harrington; and kissed his wife, who bade her good husband, with tears and fond embraces, God-speed.

"But, my dear," said she, suddenly, "suppose there should be no room in the coach, outside or in?"

"Oh dear, dear!" that never occurred to me; "really, Mary, you are always supposing such mischances"—

"Yes; but, dearest, you know we *must* consider these things!"

Here they heard the distant horn of the approaching vehicle, which had only a few months before made its appearance in these parts; and, followed by the gardener, bearing a small portmanteau, Mr Hylton made his way quickly to the inn where the coach changed horses—so tormented by the possibility (overlooked by himself) of there being no place for him, that he nearly forgot Captain Lutteridge's expedition to the Castle. When that, however, occurred to him, he became very anxious, straining his ears in the direction of the wood, but heard no sounds. Fortunately there proved to be a vacant place on the coach; had there not, it might have gone hard with poor Ayliffe, for posting up to London was a very serious matter, and quite beyond Mr Hylton's means. This was a little auspicious circumstance, which dwelt long and often upon his mind as they rattled onward to London on his momentous errand. In about five minutes' time the coach rolled smoothly and rapidly past a small solitary cottage near the road-side, for which Mr Hylton's eye had been on the look-out, while a pang shot through his affectionate heart; for he thought of the poor child lying there, all unconscious that its mother was on a bed of death, even if then alive; and its father heavily ironed in the horrible condemned cell, doomed to die the ignominious death of a murderer within a few short hours, unless Providence should vouchsafe success to the efforts at that moment being made on his behalf by Mr Hylton. Unuttered by his lips, from the depths

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of his pious and trustful heart, proceeded an humble prayer to God, from this, His minister, that He would be pleased to give His blessing to the undertaking in which that minister was then engaged. The night was bitterly cold, and Mr Hylton much exhausted from long-continued anxiety and want of rest and food. Once or twice he would have fallen into the road, but for the interposition of his friendly and more wakeful neighbour, who told him, with a smile, on the occasion of his being thoroughly roused from fitful sleep, about three o'clock, by the echoing sound of the guard's horn, and the thundering clatter of hoofs and wheels through one of the silent towns on their way, where they changed horses—that any one who had heard him might have supposed that he was some capital convict escaping from Jack Ketch!

"What, friend!" said Mr Hylton, slightly confused, "do you say that I have been talking in my sleep?"

"Ay, sir, I reckon you have, indeed," quoth the coachman, with a respectful laugh—for he of course saw that Mr Hylton was a clergyman; and was, besides, himself at that place surrendering the reins to his successor, and had gratuities in view.

No more on the road slept Mr Hylton, nor spoke he more than a word of casual and constrained civility to his fellow-travellers, being intently concerned with his own weighty and troubled thoughts. He was going to introduce himself forthwith to a great Minister — the Secretary of State— without knowing how to obtain access to so exalted a functionary, being totally ignorant of all matters of official etiquette and procedure, and unacquainted with any one in London who could give him assistance in his desperate emergency. He trusted, however, to the purity of his motives, the consciousness of a courage which no fear of man had ever daunted, and the support and blessing of God. But still he could not blink the difficulties of the case. He was bent on interrupting the due course of the law, on a memorable and unhappily notorious occasion; he was trying to get interposed the royal prerogative of mercy towards the convicted murderer of Lord Alkmond, after an unexceptionable trial, before the eminent Chief Justice of England, who had publicly and solemnly declared his entire approval of the verdict which consigned the prisoner to the gallows. And with what weapons had Mr Hylton entered upon this warfare? His heart sunk within him as he surveyed their inadequacy. Suppose Mr Oxley and his evidence were discarded altogether from the case, was it not impregnable, as built on unquestionable facts, and the prisoner's own acknowledgments? What could Mr Hylton say, as a matter of conscience and honour, of the singular communication which had been made to him by Captain Lutteridge, utterly ignorant as Mr Hylton was of the nature of the conversation which appeared to have agitated Lord Alkmond shortly previous to his murder; and, above all, restrained as Mr Hylton was from making any use of that communication, till authorised by Captain Lutteridge? And as for the letter received from Mrs Merton, he had not that original letter with him: in short, Mr Hylton, as he drew near the mighty Babylon—which he had not seen for upwards of a quarter of a century—became more and more dejected and desponding.

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CHAPTER VIII.

THAT simple-minded and gallant officer, Captain Lutteridge, performed his promise to Mr Hylton to the very letter, but felt exceedingly disconcerted as he rode rapidly along to the Castle. For, at what a moment, and on what a subject, was he approaching the Earl of Milverstoke? On the very day on which his son's publicly-proved murderer had been capitally convicted; the Captain having little or no personal acquaintance with his lordship, beyond having experienced his splendid hospitalities; intent upon tearing open cruel wounds, just as they might be imagined beginning to heal — by suggesting all sorts of painful and agitating surmises to the Earl concerning his deceased son, if his lordship were indeed unacquainted with the facts concerning which Captain Lutteridge was coming to speak. "Egad," thought he, "I shall be thought a paltry, gossiping, meddling mischief-maker and eaves-dropper! What business had *I* to have said one syllable about a private conversation at the Castle? Why must I mention it at all? Bah!" The Captain bit his lips; his gallop subsided into a canter, then into a trot, and the trot into a walk, as he thought of all these things; and by the time that he had reached the park gates, which his attendant had gone forward to get opened, greatly to the astonishment of the sleepy gate-keeper, the Captain walked his horse very slowly indeed — slower and slower, and at length fairly stood still for some minutes, as did also his mechanical follower, who indeed would have stood so for a fortnight, or any longer given period, as a matter of course, without inward questioning or surprise, if so had done, or ordered *him* to do, his commanding officer. But Captain Lutteridge recollected that his promise had been given, and that, too, on a matter of life and death; and suddenly urging his horse into a rapid pace, soon made his way along the winding gloomy road leading to the Castle, and reined up his reeking horse, and dismounted, just as a couple of tall servants, startled by his attendant's appeal to the bell, slowly drew open half the great central door, and came out to inquire who it was that had arrived at so unusual an hour. A great wood fire, that had blazed in the hall during the day, was now burnt down to red embers; and only a dull flickering light fell from the antique lamp suspended from the lofty roof.

The Captain strode into the hall with a stout heart, and said, in his usual peremptory way, "Is my Lord Milverstoke in the Castle?"

"He is, sir."

"Send some one hither immediately, who may take a message to his lordship: I am Captain Lutteridge."

For a moment or two he was left alone, and inwardly protested that he would give a hundred pounds to see himself decently at the end of this strange and bootless expedition; for he felt now certain that he should appear before the harassed peer in no other light than that of a very impertinent and unfeeling intruder. Presently came the personage for whom he had sent, who with an air of great politeness assured the Captain that on no account could his lordship be disturbed at that hour, being just about to retire to his chamber, and being, moreover, somewhat indisposed.

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"Take his lordship, nevertheless, my name, sir, immediately; assuring him that were my errand not most pressing, I would not trespass on his lordship's privacy in this manner."

On this the gentleman bowed and withdrew, leaving the Captain with all the comfortable composure of one consciously standing on a mine certain to explode within a minute or two. He was presently invited into an adjoining chamber, where he saw a gentleman in black, who begged to be favoured with the nature of his business at that hour with the Earl of Milverstoke.

"Is it not enough, sir, for me to say who I am, and that I must see his lordship, if it be only for a few minutes, on business that admits of no delay? In short, life and death being, possibly, concerned!"

The gentleman gave him a strange look, and then withdrew, promising to return very shortly, with the Earl's pleasure on the matter.

"My Lord was about retiring, and is indisposed to see any one, sir," said he, reappearing after the lapse of a few minutes; "but I am to say, that after what you have mentioned, sir, his lordship cannot but receive you for a short time. Will you follow me, sir?"

So the Captain did, with a certain quaint, cheerless determination, mixed of courage and shame; and presently was ushered into a magnificent apartment, where sat the Earl, alone, in evening dress, in deep mourning, with a melancholy countenance, and a restrained demeanour.

"I have the honour to receive you, Captain Lutteridge," said his lordship, with a courtesy manifestly tinged with stern surprise, "at a very unusual hour, at your pressing instance. I am told that you represent it as concerning matters of life and death. What can you possibly mean, sir?"

"Though I feel, my Lord," replied Captain Lutteridge, firmly, "that I appear intrusive,—and a great effort it has cost me to come,—I don't relish, I must own, the tone in which your lordship is pleased to address one who has the honour to bear His Majesty's commission, and has had also the honour to be a guest of your lordship's."

"Captain Lutteridge, I beg your pardon," said the Earl loftily, "if anything in my demeanour has offended you. I am not well, sir, as I think; and you may possibly be able to guess that this has been a day not calculated to compose my spirits."

This last was said with real dignity and sorrow, and his frank visitor's pique vanished as the words were uttered.

"Being a soldier, my Lord," said he, with a frank, courteous air, "I will come instantly to the point. Your lordship has of course heard all that took place at the trial of—of the man—to-day?"

"Sir, I have," replied his lordship, gloomily.

"'Tis about something which happened during the trial that I have felt compelled to come to your lordship, in this untimely manner; the man dies on Monday morning, my Lord, if the law takes its course."

The Earl gazed at him in silence for some moments, with a very peculiar expression of countenance, and the Captain gazed at the Earl; and both were silent.

"Well, sir, and what then?" inquired the Earl, slowly.

"Oh, my Lord, do not mistake me; I am not come to plead for a murderer!"

"I earnestly entreat you, sir, to be so good as to inform me immediately of the object of this your most extraordinary errand to me; I protest that I am quite confounded, sir, at present."

"Your lordship's known firmness of character will, I am sure, tolerate my alluding for a moment to the—noble victim of the convicted"—

"In the name of Heaven, sir, what are you talking about?" inquired the Earl, with startling vehemence of manner.

"Do not, my Lord, be distressed; I will come at once to the matter which has brought me hither. On the fatal evening which made your lordship sonless, I had the distinction of being one of your lordship's guests: I remained with the late lamented Lord

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Alkmond"—the Earl visibly shuddered from head to foot—"and one or two others, after your lordship and others had withdrawn; and to-day, in Court, the Judge, it seems, inquired"—

"I have heard, sir," said the Earl, in a subdued tone, but still with great sternness, and making evidently a strong effort to overcome his emotion, "that the Chief Justice asked a question, which was not answered.—Have *you* heard, sir, what that question was?"

"Yes, my Lord; it was concerning the strangeness of the Lord Alkmond's quitting the Castle at such an hour." The Earl involuntarily closed his eyes for a few seconds, in manifest mental agony. "I cannot tell, my Lord, what was the cause of his lordship's leaving on that occasion."

"Captain Lutteridge, I may see you," said the Earl, with an agonised look, "another day"—

"I pledge to your lordship the honour of an officer and a gentleman, that the few words which I have to utter must be said now, or never!"

"Do you wish, sir, to see me fall prostrate at your feet?" inquired the Earl, with an air of extreme misery.

"No, my Lord; and I will conclude in a moment. My Lord, I recollect, on the occasion to which I allude, a conversation arising after your lordship had withdrawn. I took no part in it. I saw that, for some reason, the subject talked of grew more and more distressing to my Lord Alkmond: I tried to change the topic, but it seemed fated to be persevered with; and at length his lordship was so disturbed that I, with whom he was talking, arose, much concerned, to quit the room: whether others observed it I know not, but we parted—I going to the ball-room, his lordship towards the corridor leading to the terrace. That is all, my Lord, that I know; this has brought me hither; and I am to ask your lordship for leave to tell all this, signifying much, or signifying little, to those who may say it is likely—in short, my Lord, 'tis said by some—that there is a mystery hanging over this case, and that efforts will be forthwith made in the proper quarter to get the man's life spared long enough for further inquiry, if so be there remain time; that is, the man at present having to die, by his sentence, on Monday morning: therefore, my Lord, I, thinking it only just to stir in this, when unfortunately having chanced this day to let fall to others that which, till now, had never passed my lips, am here, as I said to your lordship, on matters of life and death"—here the Castle clock struck eleven: and the Captain added suddenly, "if it be not, my Lord, already too late, the coach passing through Milverstoke in an hour hence."

Captain Lutteridge was so completely absorbed with his own earnest feelings, and the not very complicated movements of his own mind—at best, moreover, no particularly acute observer of the manner of others—that he did not see the tremendous agitation which his noble companion was doing his utmost to suppress. Had the light, too, been somewhat brighter, the Captain might have observed evidences in Lord Milverstoke's striking countenance, of the shock which his straightforward and unthinking visitor had occasioned him, by the strange account which he had given concerning the mysterious conversation at the banquet, immediately preceding Lord Alkmond's exit from the Castle into the woods, from which he was destined never to return alive. At length the restrained breathing of Lord Milverstoke, becoming every moment more and more violent, attracted the attention of Captain Lutteridge.

"Why, my Lord, I fear much that I have disquieted your lordship—that you are ill. God forbid, my Lord, that I should have occasioned you this distress; but I never thought it would have come to this point, or I would not have stirred in the matter. I hope I have your lordship's pardon for an untimely visit; one which, I begin to fear, is somewhat unmannerly even. But did your lordship never hear of all this before? seeing three or four others knew it besides me, and now I wish I had not. My Lord! my Lord!

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you seem ill; shall I call for assistance?"

Lord Milverstoke heaved a vast sigh, and stretched forth his hand violently, deprecating the threatened movement of the Captain, who was quite bewildered by the sight of such fearful mental agony, which he could not account for satisfactorily, merely by referring to his present visit and the communication which he had made.

"Shall I retire, my Lord?" said he.

Lord Milverstoke rose hastily, shaking his head, and walked to and fro rapidly, with even increasing agitation, having, indeed, a far deeper cause for it than was dreamed of by the Captain, though he had unknowingly called it into action. The Earl walked with heavy step to the door, and secured it; then returned to his seat, and in a low smothered voice said, "What was the subject that you talked of?"

The Captain told him, in a single word, which caused Lord Milverstoke suddenly to sink back in his chair, as though he had been seized with a fit. Captain Lutteridge instantly rose and went towards the door, saying to himself, aloud, "Now will I have help;" which words, added to the loud sound of his footfalls hastening to the door, roused Lord Milverstoke, and with a great effort he exclaimed, "Sir—Captain Lutteridge—pray, sir, let us remain alone: this is my house; surely, sir, I am master here!"

Both remained silent for some minutes, during which the flustered faculties of Captain Lutteridge were occupied with only one thought—"Could any man living have supposed all this would have come out of the business?"

Language, indeed, could not adequately describe the feelings which were at that moment convulsing the very soul of Lord Milverstoke within him; for a new and fearful light had been suddenly reflected on some scenes between him and his late son, which had always occasioned the Earl, even in his son's lifetime, anxiety; and, after his death, serious disquietude. The former, however, had been in no small degree tinged with displeasure; the latter, with grief and misgiving. The unbidden visitor before him, on whose face the Earl's eye was fixed, half unconsciously, had, as it were, ruthlessly opened the grave of Lord Alkmond, that his miserable figure might glide reproachfully and in terror before a father who had ever, by his own austerity and pride, checked and disheartened that son, when he might have meditated reposing hearty confidence in his father, as between man and man. "What may not my poor Alkmond have been burthened with when he—when he implored me—in vain,"—thought the Earl, pressing both his hands to his forehead, and then rising and pacing the chamber to and fro, with an expression of countenance which led Captain Lutteridge to fear the possibility of his being alone with one who was about to burst out into madness. The Captain resolved, therefore, simply to be on his guard, making his observations in silence upon the perturbed spirit before him. The Earl appeared to start from one reverie only to sink into some other, more agitating; but gradually the violence of his feelings seemed to be somewhat abating.

At length, "My Lord, it is long since the clock struck eleven," abruptly exclaimed the Captain, rising.

"Is it, sir?" inquired the Earl, languidly, and as though he did not comprehend why the Captain had made the observation.

"Yes, my Lord, nearly half an hour: the coach goes by at twelve, and Mr Hylton starts"—

"What, sir? what sir?" interrupted the Earl, sternly. Oh, I had forgotten; private circumstances, Captain Lutteridge, which you know not of, nor ever can, have caused your words this night to stab me as with a knife! And besides, sir, sorrow has of late not a little shaken my nerves."

"My Lord, I cannot adequately express my regret: but time presses—what is to be done?"

The Earl looked as though evidently making a strong effort to address his

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mind to what the Captain was saying to him.

"The man hangs, my Lord, past praying for, on Monday morning"—

"And why should he not, sir?" thundered the Earl, in a voice which echoed through the lofty and spacious apartment, and for a moment all trace of his lordship's previous agony had disappeared.

"Why, my Lord, perhaps," said Captain Lutteridge, stoutly and calmly, "he may not be rightly condemned."

"Are you in your senses, sir?" inquired the Earl, vehemently.

"Yes, my Lord," replied Captain Lutteridge, quietly.

"I think you are not, sir! Nor are you, sir! Do you, in your sober senses, come hither to the father of one so savagely murdered"—his voice shook—"as my son was, and speak of the accursed miscreant convicted of it, as possibly innocent, against proof as clear as that Cain murdered Abel? And did I hear, sir, aright, that you and Mr Hylton—*Mr Hylton*—are laying your heads together to defeat justice—to call my son in anger and horror out of his grave?" He paused.

"My Lord, a plain-spoken soldier am I, and must needs come to the point. The time, my Lord, the time!" he continued, in a loud and peremptory tone.

"What is your object here, sir?" inquired the Earl, with gloomy fierceness.

"Can I have your lordship's leave to tell Mr Hylton that which I have just mentioned to your lordship?"

"No, sir!" answered the Earl, again in a voice of thunder; and his eye seemed to glance lightning at his companion; who bowed and said, rather sternly,

"That, my Lord, suffices. God forbid that I should so far forget the character of an officer, of a gentleman, as to utter a syllable more to any one living upon the subject, without your lordship's permission, in whose house I heard it. Time, therefore, now no longer presses, my Lord," said the Captain, with sad emphasis; "and I can but, in quitting your lordship, ask your forgiveness for thus having troubled you so unwarrantably."

"What can this, that you have told me, sir," said the Earl, with returning agitation, "by any possibility have to do with the bloodthirsty miscreant who is to die on Monday? Should you not, sir, have considered *that*, before you came, this night, hither?"

"My Lord, I did consider, and that to the best of my power: and I myself said, that even should your lordship give me the permission which I sought for, I saw not its bearing on the case of him that is to die on Monday."

"Nor has it, sir! nor can it, sir!—not one *iota!*"

The Earl seemed suddenly moved by some inward feelings of a less stormy nature than those by which he had hitherto been agitated.

"Captain Lutteridge," he continued, "I am a man nearly broken down by misery and misfortune, heavier than man can bear: therefore I ask your pardon, very heartily, sir, for any discourtesy of which I may have been guilty; but you have taken me frightfully by surprise."

The utter wretchedness of the Earl's voice and manner, as he spoke these words, penetrated the heart of Captain Lutteridge.

"My Lord, I trust you will say nothing of it. I owe your lordship unspeakable amends for what I have done; and now see what methinks I might have seen before, had I considered the matter fully," replied the Captain, heartily; "but it was the thought of life and death that led me astray."

"Do you not think, sir, that if I believed there were any reasonable doubt of the guilt which has been openly proved to-day, according to law, against the prisoner, I would not, from mere justice, wish him to escape?"

"God forbid that you should not, my Lord."

"But this man, sir, has long had a deadly malice against me and my family, sir—so has his father; you know not a tithe of the matter, Captain, I verily assure you."

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"My Lord, I know nothing whatever of it, but from public talk."

"Did you say, sir, that this night persons are travelling to London to attempt to procure the pardon of a clearly convicted murderer?"

"My Lord, Mr Hylton has by this time, I reckon, taken his seat in the coach, and such is certainly his object; so I understood him."

The Earl said nothing, but sighed with mingled anger and astonishment. After a pause, "Captain Lutteridge," said he, "may I ask so great a favour of you, as that you will speak to me again on Tuesday upon the subject which you have this evening communicated to me? I never till now heard of it; and can it be doubted, sir, that anything relating to my late son, my unhappy Alkmond, must be of painful, nay, frightful interest to me?"

"Most willingly shall I attend your lordship."

"And in the mean time, Captain Lutteridge, I implore you to spare the feelings of a bereaved father, and talk not of these matters to others, when your so doing may serve only to spread idle and distressing rumours. Remember, sir,"—his voice quivered—"his youthful widow!—she at present survives—is at this unhappy moment under the same roof with you, but may soon follow her murdered husband to the grave."

"That grave shall not be more silent than I, my Lord!"

The Captain, as he uttered these words, rose, and bowing low to the afflicted peer, who courteously and sadly bade him adieu, quitted the apartment, and immediately afterwards the Castle; riding rapidly home to the barracks, his mind in a strange tumult. He had seen no little service in his day, but never before had meddled with such matters as had just occurred between himself and the Earl of Milverstoke. When he had reached the inn where the coach stopped, he found that Mr Hylton had gone by it to London some quarter of an hour before; and without knowing precisely why, the Captain took it for granted that, after what had just taken place at the Castle, Mr Hylton's errand was in vain, and that before his return to Milverstoke the convict Ayliffe's body would be in the hands of the surgeon.

CHAPTER IX.

Rather late in the afternoon of Saturday Mr Hylton arrived in London, and put up, for the few hours during which he intended staying there, at the inn where the coach stopped. He took not long to dress, and still less to partake of refreshment, anxious to lose not a moment of his precious time. Forth, therefore, he sallied towards Westminster, with the situation and localities of which he had, in earlier days, been not unacquainted. As he was hurrying along the crowded streets, the incessant and strange hubbub of which seemed stunning to a comparative recluse like himself, desperately fatigued also, and absorbed with a most portentous mission, it suddenly recurred to him, as he got in sight of the Government offices and ministerial residences, that he was a total stranger in London, having come off without credentials or introductions of any kind. How, then, was he to expect reception and attention from the Secretary of State, on a matter, moreover, of such magnitude as attempting to stay the execution of a criminal whose conviction for so enormous an atrocity as the murder of Lord Alk-

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mond had become a subject of national attention? As all this flashed across his mind, he stopped, struck his stick despairingly on the pavement, and for some moments arrested the attention of the passers-by, as the very image of one, indeed, in a horrid quandary. For, looked at from this point of view, the grounds or materials on which he had been relying for the success of his application seemed suddenly shrunk and shrivelled into nothing, or at least gross inadequacy to their object. But the miserable image of Ayliffe, lying heavily ironed in the condemned cell, brought within a few hours of eternity —the sands of life running out fast— and he too a perfectly innocent man, as Mr Hylton in his conscience believed him, quickened his movements and re-strung his relaxed energies. Silently invoking God's blessing on his humane enterprise, he hurried onward, and presented himself at the door of the Secretary of State's office, before which was slowly pacing a sentry, who paid no attention whatsever to his inquiry whether the Secretary of State were within. Making up his mind to encounter and disregard all kinds of discourtesy, so as he but gained his object, and trusting some little to his sacred character and appearance, and his consciousness of having a gentleman's address, he entered the outer office, from which were at the moment passing several gentlemen drawing on their gloves, and some holding riding-whips in their hands, as if intending forthwith to mount their horses, which were standing at the door. One of these, a gay young gentleman, evidently of quality, Mr Hylton, in a courteous manner, spoke to, as he was passing, heartily laughing at some joke of the person nearest to him, and who seemed very obsequious.

"Sir, I ask your forgiveness for the intrusion," quoth Mr Hylton in an earnest manner, taking off his hat; "but is the Secretary of State within?"

"What though he be?" jocularly interposed the companion of the gentleman who had been addressed. The latter, however, took off his hat with a bland and high-bred air, nobly contrasting with that of the rude intruder, and said, "Lord Farnborough, sir, is within, but cannot be seen, being here beyond his usual hour of attendance, engaged on business of great importance: but, reverend sir, can I do aught for you in the meanwhile?"

"I greatly thank you, sir,"—

"My Lord, if you please"—interrupted the one already spoken of, with an air of vulgar sycophancy, which was fittingly rewarded by his noble companion desiring him, with transparent contempt of manner, to see whether his lordship's horse was in readiness.

"Will you follow me, sir, for a moment?" said the young Lord, and immediately turned back, requesting Mr Hylton to accompany him; and the two walked through several long, lofty, dusky passages, till they arrived at the room which Mr Hylton's companion had only just quitted. Having ordered out the servants, who were busily engaged arranging the chairs and tables, "What may be your errand, sir?" said he, in a very gracious manner.

"My Lord—for 'tis plain I, through unacquaintance with town, mistook your Lordship's rank and station"—

"Oh, think nothing of it, sir, I beg," said his Lordship, rather hastily.

"I have just come up, my Lord, concerning a case of life and death"—

"Oh, some prisoner left for execution at one of the Assizes? I understand: proceed, sir, if you please. But may I ask you who you are, reverend sir?"

"I am the Reverend Henry Hylton, Vicar of Milverstoke, my Lord."

"Ho! Milverstoke! Milverstoke! That is the place," said his Lordship, very gravely, "where the man was yesterday convicted for the murder of my Lord Alkmond, Lord Milverstoke's son?"

"Yes, my Lord; he is to suffer his sentence on Monday, unless he be respited; and on that subject I have come up, and have but just quitted the coach."

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"Oh! you are seeking a respite? but that, you know, especially in such a case as this—however, of course you are prepared with *grounds?*"

"I am, my Lord."

"Sir, you shall see my Lord Farnborough immediately: he will, I am sure, receive you, however otherwise occupied he may happen just now to be." On this his lordship withdrew, leaving Mr Hylton alone for a few moments; on which he took out his pocket-book, saw that his few manuscripts were there in readiness, and hastily arranged his thoughts so as to express himself with the utmost possible brevity, point, and force. After scarcely three minutes' absence, his lordship returned, followed by a gentleman, whom he desired to show Mr Hylton into the private room of Lord Farnborough: a minute more, and the all-important interview between Mr Hylton and the Minister had commenced. The nobleman who then filled that office of splendid responsibility was an eminent statesman—a great man—the whole of whose energies and resources were just then taxed to the uttermost by the distracted state of the country, and the necessity of promptly and effectually providing for its safety, and at the same time justifying his measures against a most malignant Opposition in parliament. Mr Hylton, himself a man of intellect, was instantly charmed by the Minister's appearance; for, with a noble cast of features, decisively evidencing practised mental power, he looked calmness itself: though evidently harassed, by no means *oppressed*, by his multifarious and distracting duties. He quietly and courteously pointed to a vacant chair nearly opposite to him, and on which Mr Hylton immediately sat down.

"Will you be so obliging as to state, shortly, your business, sir?" said Lord Farnborough.

"I presume, my Lord, you have heard of the murder of the late Lord Alkmond?"

"Yes, sir; and I find that a person named Ayliffe was yesterday tried before the Lord Chief Justice at the Assizes, convicted for the murder, and is left for execution on Monday."

"That is so, my Lord. I am the Vicar of Milverstoke, and the convict is an old parishioner of mine, of hitherto spotless and exemplary character. I am perfectly satisfied that he is really innocent of this charge."

"How came he to be convicted, then? Have you any evidence which was not laid before the judge and jury? And if it was not, why? Or do you imagine that there has been any miscarriage?"

"If you will permit me, my Lord, to state briefly the nature of the case as laid before the jury"—

"Pardon me, sir, a moment," said his lordship, gently ringing a small hand-bell; on which a gentleman entered, to whom he whispered in a low tone. The gentleman withdrew, and Mr Hylton proceeded to give a brief and lucid sketch of the case, as proved, to which he perceived the Minister listening with perfect attention. While Mr Hylton was proceeding, the gentleman above spoken of reappeared, but immediately withdrew, after having silently placed a sheet of paper before the Minister, who glanced at it for an instant only, and resumed his attitude of close attention to Mr Hylton.

"I perceive, sir," said his lordship, when Mr Hylton had concluded, "from your succinct and candid statement, that any difficulties which might be supposed to have existed, were conclusively disposed of by the prisoner's own acknowledgment to the jury. I must say that it appears to me an unusually strong case for a conviction. You ask me, sir, to advise the interposition of the Royal prerogative to stay the execution of the law—a matter always of infinite delicacy, and, in this case, responsibility—and I, at present, see no sufficient grounds for doing so. Since you have been here, however, I have ascertained that the Lord Chief Justice has arrived in town, and is now at his house. I expect his report this evening; and in the mean time he is the person to whom you should address yourself."

"My Lord—forgive me, but did I

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succeed in making myself understood, as asking not for a reprieve, but for a short respite only, to afford time for inquiry?"

"Perfectly, sir—but you had better go at once to the Lord Chief Justice, who has power to order — with whom, indeed, it in the first instance properly rests—the respite for which you ask. I recommend you, sir, however, not to be sanguine."

"But will his lordship receive me at once?"

"Unquestionably, sir; in serious matters of this sort everybody is always accessible: God forbid that it should be otherwise!"

The Minister's significant glance, while uttering the last words, at evidently a newly-opened despatch, apprised Mr Hylton that his audience was over. Bowing profoundly, he therefore withdrew; the Minister courteously returning his salutation, while his lordship drew before him the important and pressing document, of which Mr Hylton's arrival had delayed his perusal. Mr Hylton soon found his way to the room where he had left the young Lord, who had remained there waiting for him. Mr Hylton was anxious to have spoken on the subject of his interview with the Minister; but, from his lordship's manner, concluded that such a procedure was contrary to etiquette. He, therefore, contented himself with asking the address of the Lord Chief Justice, which was immediately procured for him; and shortly afterwards got into a coach, and drove straight to the Lord Chief Justice's house, greatly disheartened by the reception which he had just met with from the courteous but frigid Lord Farnborough. On inquiring whether the Lord Chief Justice was within, a footman somewhat superciliously answered in the affirmative, but added that his lordship, having only a few hours before returned from Circuit, was about sitting down to dinner, and could on no account whatever be disturbed. Mr Hylton pretty sharply said that his business admitted of no delay. The butler, a corpulent, bald-headed, gentlemanly person, happening at that moment to pass along the hall, and hearing the peremptory tone in which Mr Hylton was speaking, came forward, and in an affable manner said that he had no objection to hear shortly the nature of the gentleman's business, and by-and-by tell it to my Lord; but that his lordship certainly could not be disturbed till after dinner. The grave nature of Mr Hylton's errand, and the earnest humour of his mind, prevented his being amused, as he otherwise would have been, by these menial airs.

"Tell his lordship, if you please," said he quietly, "that I am the Reverend Mr Hylton, the Vicar of Milverstoke."

"Oh! is it about the Milverstoke murder, sir?" quoth the butler, with a good-natured air: "'tis a very awful murder, folks say."

"Take in my name, sir, instantly, to his lordship!" said Mr Hylton sternly.

"Bless us!" said the butler, half whistling, but went to the library; and, after a few minutes' absence returned, quite an altered man, bowing obsequiously; and Mr Hylton was immediately ushered into the presence of the Lord Chief Justice: a man considerably advanced in years; of benevolent countenance; care-worn, grave, and of dignified bearing; a great lawyer; of simple and pure character, and unassuming manners. He sate beside a large fire, in dinner-dress, but had been busily engaged reading, when Mr Hylton's name was announced; in short, his lordship was carefully looking over his notes of several capital cases, and, amongst others, of that which had brought Mr Hylton up to town. The instant that his name was mentioned, his lordship recollected the striking scene which he had accidentally witnessed, immediately after sentencing the Milverstoke murderer; and nothing could be more respectful or cordial than his reception of Mr Hylton.

"I fear I can only too surely conjecture, reverend sir," said his lordship gravely, as soon as Mr Hylton was seated, "the object of your visit to

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London; it must be connected with that terrible case of the murder of Lord Alkmond, tried before me yesterday."

"It is so, my Lord, indeed," replied Mr Hylton sighing. The Lord Chief Justice shook his head, and shrugged his shoulders with dismal significance, but said nothing. "I trust that I shall be able, my Lord, notwithstanding those ominous gestures of your lordship's, to satisfy you that a case is made out for, at all events, some little postponement of the execution of the sentence, in order to afford time for inquiry—I say—for inquiry—for inqui"—

Mr Hylton suddenly seemed unconscious of what he was saying, having become very faint, and sinking back in his chair—for a moment overcome with exhaustion, want of food, and long-continued agitation and excitement. The Lord Chief Justice paid him the kindest attentions; and after a short time he recovered himself, offering apologies, but attributing the weakness frankly to the true cause.

"Ah! sir," said his lordship, kindly, "these *are* very agitating affairs, even to us Judges, however long we may have been accustomed to this melancholy portion of our duties; but let us go in to dinner, Mr Hylton—nay, I positively insist upon it! I am quite alone, with the exception of my wife, whom I have scarcely seen since my return from Circuit a few hours ago, or you and I would dine together alone. You cannot do justice to your case, whatever it may be, trust me, till you have a little recruited your physical energies. We have, indeed, both travelled far and fast since we met; and I, too, am somewhat exhausted."

Mr Hylton intimated that dining would be, in his own case, just then, an idle ceremony.

"Sir," interrupted the Lord Chief Justice, with an air of good-natured peremptoriness, "I will not speak a syllable to you on business, however pressing, till we have both enabled ourselves, by a meal as brief and temperate as you please, to attend to it with revived, and only befitting energy." This proved irresistible, and Mr Hylton presently found himself sitting at the plain and unostentatious dinner-table of the Lord Chief Justice and his lady. Not a syllable was spoken by either his lordship or Mr Hylton, during dinner, concerning the subject, nor on anything akin to it, which was to be so solemnly discussed by them presently; and within an hour from their sitting down, they both withdrew to the library.

"Now, Mr Hylton," commenced his lordship, with a suddenly-resumed judicial air, turning over the leaves of a manuscript volume, "I have before me my notes of the trial of Adam Ayliffe yesterday. What have you to say on the subject? Has anything important come to light since the trial? For if not, I must tell you, at the outset, not to be sanguine as to the issue of your benevolent enterprise; for a clearer case, I think I have seldom, if indeed ever, tried. I trust that you have no fault to find with the way in which I put the case to the jury? Pray speak freely, reverend sir, and without ceremony; we are all only too liable to error."

"My Lord, I frankly assure you that I can take no exception whatever to your lordship's summing up: it was fearfully simple and cogent, but perfectly and absolutely fair."

"Why, you see," said the Chief Justice thoughtfully, "the man's own hands fastened the rope round his neck: he voluntarily took up a position, from which the wit of man could not extricate him. Had he been aquitted, on such a state of facts as went to the jury, trial would be a farce. He brings himself to the body of the murdered man, instantly after the murder, and runs away bloody, and with a bloody weapon capable of committing the murder, as was sworn by the surgeon. Even if he thought he had struck another man whom, according to his own story, he had meant to strike, what signifies it in point of law? The person whom he so killed by mistake, he murdered: God forbid, reverend sir, that there should be any doubt about *that!*"

"Oh no, my Lord!—I do not pre-

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sume to question the law which your lordship laid down: I own it seems to be perfectly reasonable and just. But I venture to come now, my Lord, at once to what I humbly but confidently submit will satisfy your lordship that this case cannot possibly rest where it does at present."

"Well, let me hear," said the Lord Chief Justice, disposing himself in an attitude of great attention; but the tone of his voice seemed, to Mr Hylton, to argue something like a foregone conclusion as to the futility of what was to be brought before him.

"Permit me to ask your lordship, that I may not be over-estimating the value of what I am going to adduce before you, whether you did not deem of great importance the absence of any sound of footsteps in the wood, on the night of the murder, in any other direction than that in which the prisoner ran?"

"Certainly, certainly; surely I myself pressed the witnesses on that part of the case?"

"You did, my Lord."

"And indeed the point is most important. If you recollect, Mr Solicitor-General read a passage from Lord Coke, in which that very condition is relied on as an integral part of what he calls his violent presumption of guilt."

"Well, my Lord, and so it occurred to me," said Mr Hylton, taking out from his pocket-book, evidently with no little excitement and expectation, the letter of Mrs Merton; which, after explaining who the writer was, and how it was that her communication had not reached him till after the trial, he put into the Chief Justice's hands, and eyed him, as he perused it, with extreme anxiety, scrutinising every feature. The Chief Justice read it attentively — very attentively, even twice — looking at the outside, the postmark, and superscription; and all the while in perfect silence, and with a countenance from which it was impossible to collect what impression had been produced on his mind. Then he quietly laid down the letter, towards Mr Hylton; whose face fell as he said,

"Well, my Lord, what think you? Have I overrated the importance of this letter?"

"You have not had the experience that I have had, Mr Hylton," said he, with a serious air, "nor have you any idea of the cunning devices to which prisoners and their friends will have recourse, to mislead inquiry and divert suspicion. I have known of one or two, and heard of several, instances not unlike the present."

"Why, surely, surely, my Lord, you cannot have borne in mind who the writer is—a lady, a friend of mine, wife of a clergyman, and she of a most exemplary character? The idea, my Lord, of her"—

"Oh, Mr Hylton, you quite misapprehend me. Independently of even your own testimony, I think I know a little myself of this lady: she belongs to a family with whom I have some acquaintance, and her husband is, I understand, a distinguished divine. This good lady believes, doubtless, in the genuineness and authenticity of the letter she speaks of; but"—he shook his head—"that carries us a *very* little way on our journey indeed! I told you not to be sanguine, Mr Hylton, as you must remember. Besides, where is the original? How could any judge safely act, in even the most trivial case, on the document now before us, which is not even, nor professes to be, a copy? And observe you, the original itself would, in my opinion, carry us no further. Come, my dear sir," said he kindly, observing Mr Hylton's blank and crestfallen look, "can you yourself supply me with reasons against the validity of those with which I am forced to encounter your letter?"

"Yes, my Lord. Remember, I pray you, that I am not asking for a pardon, nor calling on you to assume the functions of a jury, but only to interpose a little time for inquiry, before this poor wretch *goes hence, and is no more seen!* Suppose he be executed on Monday morning, and the same afternoon the writer of the letter in question should arrive, and uncontestably establish the truth of what is contained in it?"

"Why, suppose he did, Mr Hylton!

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Apply an unbiassed mind to the case, as if you had yourself to administer justice. Are you, by the way, a magistrate?" Mr Hylton bowed acquiescence. "I am glad of it. Suppose the writer did actually see one, or two, or any number of men, running along the shore, as represented; how are they to be connected with the bloody transaction in the wood? Is it not, to begin with, by the way, separated from the shore by cliffs?"

"Yes, my Lord, but by no means by lofty cliffs; persons have been known to drop over without injury: there are no rocks beneath. And who can say but that the persons mentioned in this letter may have done the deed?"

The Lord Chief Justice shook his head; but took up the letter and read it again, with, as Mr Hylton sanguinely supposed, more thoughtfulness than his lordship wished to be visible to an observer.

"Pardon me, my Lord," said he, "but there occurs to me another way of putting the case. And while we thus discuss it, how fast fly away this man's precious moments!"

"I am perfectly and painfully aware of *that*, reverend sir," replied his lordship, looking pointedly at Mr Hylton, who felt the delicate rebuke, and bowed.

"I was going to say, my Lord: Suppose I had received this letter, or the one to which it refers, before the Court opened yesterday morning, and the prisoner's counsel had applied to your lordship to postpone the trial till the next Assizes?"

"Sir, that is well worth considering, undoubtedly. You put your points ably, Mr Hylton."

Again the Chief Justice took up the letter. "Is this in Mrs Merton's own handwriting?" he inquired, apparently carelessly.

"I will swear to it, my Lord. And, by the way, for aught I know, Mr Merton may by this time have brought, or forwarded, the original letter to my house, and it may be there awaiting me at this moment."

"Certainly, certainly; that may be so," said the Chief Justice, musingly, but still discouragingly. "Is this, however, the only matter which you are desirous of bringing before me?" he inquired.

"Oh no, my Lord: I have three others."

"I shall be very happy to hear them, sir. Pray proceed."

"What I now am about to mention, my Lord, is of a confidential, and at present, I own, an unsatisfactory nature; but, if time be given, I am not hopeless of discovering something highly important. Your lordship recollects observing at the trial, on the singularity of Lord Alkmond's having gone out into the woods at such an hour of the night, and when such festivities were going on at the Castle."

"Undoubtedly: it is indeed a curious circumstance, which I should like to have had, if possible, explained. Did I not ask some of the witnesses about it?"

"Yes, my Lord: Mr Oxley, Lord Milverstoke's agent. Since the trial—but I repeat, my Lord, that I am at present placed in circumstances of exquisite embarrassment, with reference to this subject." The Lord Chief Justice looked with great curiosity at Mr Hylton, on his saying this. "I have some reason to believe, and that, too, from persons of station, that Lord Alkmond's going into the wood was not so wholly unaccountable as at present it appears, but was connected with a circumstance or circumstances which may possibly—I say possibly, my Lord—come to be, in due time, fully disclosed; and the person to whom I allude was in communication, on the subject, with another person of exalted station, at the moment of my quitting Milverstoke. The issue I shall not know till I return; but I have heard sufficient to excite lively anxiety and curiosity; and possibly—but, my Lord, I repeat, only possibly—the result may be suddenly to invest this dreadful transaction with great mystery. My word, however, is pledged to take no further steps at present, nor to indicate even the nature of what I have heard, without the express permission of the person to whom I have

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been alluding. I may, nevertheless, tell your lordship, that I am acting on information sent to me with great anxiety, in consequence of a gentleman being present at the trial, who, on his return home, communicated to a friend that which had fallen from your lordship, and led him to use his utmost exertions to bring this matter to my notice immediately. Thrice had a mounted messenger from him been sent to my house between the close of the trial and my return to Milverstoke; and I met the last messenger, and followed him back, while yet on my way home. It is a scruple of extreme delicacy alone that suddenly prevented this gentleman's at once communicating to me what he knew."

To all this the Chief Justice listened with profound attention. "I am sure, Mr Hylton," said he, gravely, "that a gentleman of your superior capacity, to say nothing of your position as a clergyman and magistrate, is aware of the responsibility attaching to anything said by you to me on such an occasion as this, and that you cannot be unconsciously yielding eagerly to first impressions, and misty conjectures?"

"My Lord, I speak most advisedly, in my conscience believing it possible —and at present I put it no higher— that there may be something in the background fully warranting the step which I am taking. I do not feel myself at liberty, speaking for a moment as a man of even mere worldly honour, to mention who is the person of whom I am speaking, or what his station in society. Nay, my Lord, I now recollect what I feel bound to mention, that he expressed his own belief that the matter would prove not to be connected with that in question; but he had previously said enough to make me take a very, very different view of the affair."

"And you assure me that the matter is at this moment in a train of inquiry?"

"Undoubtedly, undoubtedly, my Lord."

"Very well, Mr Hylton: all this is curious at least. What next?"

"Why, my Lord, I have, I think, discovered facts tending to impeach the perfect trustworthiness of Mr Oxley as a witness."

"I doubt whether that gentleman's evidence really touches the merits of the question, one way or the other."

"But the Solicitor-General, my Lord, on the part of the Crown, pointedly mentioned that evidence to the jury; and afterwards proved it, as giving a peculiarly malignant complexion to the case."

"He did, sir, certainly. Well, Mr Hylton, and what of *that* matter?"

"Why, the way that it strikes me, my Lord, is, that Mr Solicitor-General may be supposed to have himself felt the importance of establishing a motive on the part of the prisoner for perpetrating so enormous and seemingly unaccountable a crime, as slaying the eldest son and heir of a very eminent peer of the realm. However this may be, my Lord, what prejudice may it not have worked against the unfortunate prisoner, turning the minds of his jury away from a dispassionate examination of the case?"

"Mr Hylton, do not lay too much stress on such topics. Look at the undisputed facts—the bloody reality, if I may so speak, of this dreadful case, standing even solely on the prisoner's own voluntary statement: the bloody sleeve—the bloody club—and the affrighted flight from the corpse of the murdered man! Let us bring our common sense to bear on these few, but terrible, facts of the case; and then how unimportant become the topics which you seem about to urge, Mr Hylton! Pray, however, proceed."

"Shortly, then, my Lord, do you remember how indignantly the prisoner repudiated the words put into his mouth before the magistrate who convicted him for having possession of the hare?"

"I do perfectly, and was struck with it, sir."

"And your lordship may recollect his counsel proposing another form of expression, which was in consequence of a written suggestion sent him in Court? I, my Lord, sent that paper;

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I proposed that question; for the magistrate (who also committed him on the charge for murder) had on the day of that committal told me the words which he had heard the prisoner utter; and I have with me Sir Henry Harrington's own signed statement (here Mr Hylton produced it) made yesterday evening after the trial, attesting the words to have been most distinctly heard by him, and to be—'He shall smart for it, that brought me here;' and Sir Henry observed the prisoner glance furiously at the man who had so cruelly and perfidiously used him."

Mr Hylton paused; so did the Chief Justice, presently observing—"Well, Mr Hylton, does all this carry your case really one hair's-breadth further? Suppose the prisoner went into the wood to kill or feloniously assault his enemy, and by mistake killed the other? Have you not admitted that to be murder?"

"Forgive me, my Lord, if I press these points too far," said Mr Hylton, with sudden emotion, "but the interests of humanity impel me—I have a poor manacled and fettered figure perpetually before my eye"—

"God forbid, Mr Hylton," said the Chief Justice, solemnly and kindly, laying his hand on that of Mr Hylton, "that you should suppose it necessary to apologise for anything that you have said here. I wish you knew how greatly I am touched by your noble and disinterested exertions, which my heart is all the while most zealously seconding; but God hath given me the scales of JUSTICE to hold, and my reason must not be disturbed by my feelings. Proceed, dear sir, and say all that occurs to you, even though you stay till midnight."

How mildly and kindly was this said! Yet the words rapidly froze the Chief Justice into a pillar of ice, as it were, before Mr Hylton's eyes; and for a little while he paused to overcome his emotions.

"I feel, my Lord, getting weak and exhausted in this mortal wrestle with your lordship, on so awful an occasion. It is what I am not used to; and I must soon cease." He seemed, for a moment, at a loss.

"You were speaking," said the Chief Justice, very kindly, "of Mr Oxley's perverted or mistaken representation of what had fallen from the prisoner."

"I thank your lordship, and have only to say that Sir Henry is ill in bed of the gout, or might have been at the trial and contradicted Mr Oxley."

"Is this gentleman Mr Oxley supposed to bear any ill feeling towards the prisoner?"

"That, my Lord, is the last topic which I was going to urge. The prisoner and his father (of whom, with your lordship's permission, I shall say a word presently) have been persecuted beyond all bearing—so they both tell me, and I believe them implicitly—by Mr Oxley, who wants, as they say, to get them out of a small freehold cottage of the father's, in order that a new and more direct approach may be made from the high-road to Milverstoke Castle. Mr Oxley has, doubtless, exceeded his instructions, and what he has done is probably all unknown to Lord Milverstoke; but Mr Oxley's conduct has been unfeeling and insulting in the extreme, to these poor people, who are in great distress; and not long before last Christmas, with a bitter sneer, Mr Oxley predicted that the father would probably soon find himself in a much larger house—the workhouse."

"The brutal fellow!" exclaimed the Chief Justice, indignantly.

"On this, my Lord, the son, who was present—the prisoner, and who is a man of giant strength, rose from his stool, grasped Mr Oxley by the collar, and flung him several yards through the door, like a rotten faggot." The Chief Justice listened with an earnest air, but in silence. "On that occasion, my Lord, the father heard Mr Oxley mutter some sinister expressions to this effect—'I owe thee a turn for this.'"

"I think it very possible that he did say so; but, was it Mr Oxley who

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brought the prisoner to the bleeding body of Lord Alkmond, made him run away as for life, with a bloody club, and then own it all in open Court? Oh, Mr Hylton!"

"A word more, my Lord," said he, in a desponding tone, after both of them had been silent for some moments, during which the Chief Justice's eyes were fixed on the fire, his face indicating that he was in deep thought—"only one word more, and my melancholy mission is closed. I have known the prisoner and his father for upwards of twenty years; and do assure your lordship that the old man I have ever regarded as a perfect pattern of Christian virtue—as an Israelite in whom there is no guile—as one of the patriarchs of old—I have seen him fearfully tried—in deep affliction—ruined at last by his generosity to another: in short, indeed, a second Job, my Lord!" Here Mr Hylton suddenly stopped, for his voice failed him. The Chief Justice rose from his seat, and, as if to avoid seeing Mr Hylton's emotion, slowly walked away; really, however, to conceal his own feelings; but soon he returned.

"Thou excellent person! Thou servant of God! Thou true Samaritan!" said he, greatly moved, and taking Mr Hylton by the hand, "to my dying day I cannot forget thee. I saw thee kneeling beside that old man! When I am at my last end, would that so thou, or one as holy, might kneel beside *me!*"

"May God bless your lordship, living and dying!" faltered Mr Hylton; and it was not for several moments that either recovered his self-possession.

"Let us now return to this sad business," said, at length, the Chief Justice, mildly, and very gravely. "Have you anything further to urge?"

"Only that this poor soul, the prisoner, so far from being of the barbarous nature which could suffer him to do this cowardly deed of blood, is, and has been ever, beloved by young and old, who know him as one of generous heart; has more than once perilled his life for others; and has never done otherwise than as became a son trained by such a father as his, until sharp misery, and despairing love for his sick wife, led him to listen to the voice of the tempter in that matter of the hare! And finally, my Lord, yesterday, immediately after he had his irons put on, and was placed in the condemned cell, I was with him; and, by all his hopes of Heaven, he solemnly asseverated his total innocence, and his absolute ignorance of the person who did, or the manner in which was done, this horrible murder; and that, too, when I had, to the best of my power, taught him that he had looked his last on life—that HEREAFTER was close upon him. And, my Lord, by my own hopes, and in the presence of Him whom I serve, I verily believe, notwithstanding all appearances, that this man is innocent, or I should not have been this day with your lordship, in whose just hands," said Mr Hylton, with a sigh, "I now leave the matter."

"It is one, Mr Hylton, of some difficulty, and requires a consideration," said the Chief Justice; "which must be, as far as possible, perfectly dispassionate, and as deliberate as the urgency of the case will admit of. I shall read over my notes of the evidence with care, and give my best attention to all that you have so discreetly, and so eloquently, urged upon me this evening. You must, if you please, leave with me that letter which you received from Mrs Merton; and, if you feel disposed to return hither in two hours' time, you shall know my decision."

Seeing by his countenance and manner, that the Chief Justice desired to be immediately left alone, Mr Hylton withdrew, his lordship bidding him good evening cordially, but so very gravely, that he thereby unconsciously shot dismay into the soul of Mr Hylton. As the latter quitted the library, the butler approached, bringing him his hat and stick, with great respect, and in silence; and the next moment he was

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alone in the open air—determining to pace the gloomy square in which the Chief Justice's house was situated, or the immediate neighbourhood, till the two hours should have expired. How anxiously, as he walked about, did he revolve in his mind all that had taken place!—whether he had omitted anything, or urged anything ineffectually! Also he pondered the whole demeanour of the grave and discreet Chief Justice; his significant speech, his significant silence; how his practised judicial mind would be likely to view the case; and then good Mr Hylton thought within himself how *he* would decide the case, were it in *his* hands. At length, after having pulled out his watch more than twenty times, and waited for at least three minutes beyond the appointed two hours, Mr Hylton presented himself again at the Chief Justice's door; another person mounting the steps at the same time, and whose face Mr Hylton imagined that he had seen somewhere before. This was, in fact, the Chief Justice's head clerk, who had been shortly before summoned to attend his lordship immediately. When the door was opened, this gentleman went at once to the library, and, having knocked, was admitted; while Mr Hylton was shown into a large empty dining-room adjoining. Presently he heard the library door opened; steps across the hall; then the street door opened and closed; and then he, too, was shown into the library, where sat the Chief Justice, looking somewhat fatigued, and in the act of returning his watch into its place.

"Well, Mr Hylton," said his lordship calmly, "after much consideration of all the facts of the case, in all their bearings, as far as I could, I have felt myself at liberty to order a temporary—a brief—respite for the prisoner"—

"God bless your lordship! God be thanked!" commenced Mr Hylton excitedly; but was promptly checked, for the Chief Justice elevated his finger, and slowly shook his head in a serious and admonitory manner.

"I have thought it right, after your strenuous and *advised* representations, to afford a little time for further inquiry; but am bound to tell you, that I feel the reverse of being sanguine as to the ultimate issue. The more I consider it, the blacker seems the case against the prisoner, as it was proved at the trial before me and the public; but God forbid that, when human life is at stake, the faintest chance of saving it, and preventing the dismal spectacle of an innocent man's life being taken from him, through a mistake of the law, should be thrown away. All your energies must from this moment be exerted to establish facts tending to raise a very strong presumption, against fearfully strong appearances. For this purpose I have granted a delay of a fortnight, that all necessary inquiries may be set on foot, especially with regard to the letter spoken of in that which you left with me; and you will have the goodness, by the way, at the earliest moment that is practicable, to forward to me that other letter. It is right to intimate to you that, should you be so fortunate in your exertions, as, on a proper representation to the Earl of Milverstoke, to prevail on his lordship to concur in recommending the prisoner to the merciful consideration of the Crown, expressing a doubt as to the guilt of the prisoner, it might be attended with an important and beneficial effect, as coming from so distinguished and deeply injured a prosecutor." To this suggestion Mr Hylton listened in silent despair. "What use is to be made by the prisoner of this brief extension of his earthly career none knows better, reverend sir, than yourself, and I presume not to say a word on that subject. Humanity plainly dictates one thing—the steadfast depression of the prisoner's hopes to the lowest point possible, lest the result of your charitable interference should have been only to inflict twice on him the pangs of death. Good-by, Mr Hylton, good-by; God speed your efforts, and *if* the prisoner be inno-

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cent, may your exertions to prove it succeed."

"But the respite, my Lord—I beg your lordship's pardon—but Monday morning is awfully near us; when will your lordship order"—

"Your anxiety, sir, is only natural; but you may safely leave that matter in *my* hands," said the Chief Justice. "It has been already seen to: the respite you may regard as already on its way: it will be forwarded, for your consolation I may tell you, by two separate Government messengers, and reach the gaol, at the latest, to-morrow afternoon."

Mr Hylton saw plainly that the matter might not be pressed further; but what would he not have given to be permitted, if practicable, to accompany one of the bearers of the precious little documents, which some ten minutes before had been signed in duplicate by the Chief Justice, directing execution upon Adam Ayliffe not to be done until the Monday fortnight from the date of that order of the Chief Justice. So, with a heart beating gratitude to that merciful and considerate judge, Mr Hylton respectfully took leave, and walked with buoyant spirits and quick steps to his inn, thinking to return by that night's coach, but which he found, to his concern, had left upwards of two hours before: Mr Hylton having supposed that it would quit London at the same hour as it passed through Milverstoke—a mistake which he would soon have found out, but for his being so completely absorbed in the pressing and all-important affair which had brought him up to London. Unless he had taken a post-chaise all the way, which no adequate necessity justified him, under the circumstances, in doing, and for which, indeed, he had not by him the requisite funds, nor knew where to obtain them at a moment's notice in London, he could not reach the county town in which at that moment lay the miserable object of his solicitude before seven o'clock in the evening, by an early morning coach, which did not start from the inn at which he was staying, but from another, in a different part of the town. On reaching his inn, he went straight to bed, quite overpowered with long want of rest, travelling, and mental exhaustion; but directed himself to be called at half-past three o'clock without fail, that he might be in time for the early coach, which left at half-past four o'clock. The moment, however, that he got into bed, he sunk into the black abyss of forgetfulness, into sleep unbroken and profound; and when he awoke, scarcely knew where he was: the place around him was quite strange, the sun shone brightly, and for several minutes he seemed struggling out of some wild and gloomy dream. A guard's horn pealing in the coach-yard beneath him, however, effectually recalled his scattered faculties, and forth he sprung from his bed in consternation. It was nearly nine o'clock, and the coach by which he had hoped to start, was then some forty miles on its way towards Milverstoke! He rang his bell hurriedly; and all he could learn from the Boots was, that he had knocked till he was tired, and had even come into the room and spoken to Mr Hylton, who answered him, but must have fallen asleep again. There was no help for it. He was not a man to curse, in a dilemma such as this, himself and everybody and everything about him. A misfortune had occurred, which appeared to have been inevitable; and in reality no one soever was to blame. He had nothing for it now but to secure a place by a coach starting at seven o'clock that evening; and having done so, he betook himself to the nearest church, and attended the service there, and again at Westminster Abbey in the afternoon—feeling during the day no little misgiving concerning the duty at his own church, and whether, alas! there should have been no one found, at such short notice, to do it all. As he went to the Abbey, and also as he came away after the service, he called at the Secretary of State's office, but all there was silent, and apparently

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deserted—the sentry gravely telling him that no one attended there on Sundays. But it occurred to Mr Hylton, nevertheless, to knock and inquire; and it was very fortunate that he did so, for he found that no less a personage than an Under Secretary and several clerks were there, engaged on important business connected with apprehended disturbances in the North. With no little difficulty, Mr Hylton obtained access to one of the chief clerks; and from him learnt that a communication had been received over-night from the Chief Justice, of his having ordered a fortnight's respite to Adam Ayliffe, under sentence of death for the murder of Lord Alkmond; that two duplicate orders to that effect had been forthwith despatched by special messengers, who would deliver them, during the ensuing afternoon, into the hand of the proper authorities.

"But forgive my anxiety in a matter in which I have taken a deep interest," said Mr Hylton: "Suppose the messengers should happen to miscarry?"

"It may, of course, be the worse for the prisoner," replied the clerk somewhat impatiently; "but suppose the sky were to fall—you know the saying, sir. A special messenger miscarry, sir! Was ever such a thing heard of?"

With such consolation as could be derived from this somewhat irritable official, who was not overpleased at his extra day's work at the office, Mr Hylton departed, without having asked several other questions which had occurred to him, concerning the aid of Government in the inquiries which were to be set on foot, as suggested by the Lord Chief Justice.

CHAPTER X.

At seven o'clock, precisely, Mr Hylton took his place on the coach, which in due course would bring him to the county town where Ayliffe lay awaiting a fate only, by extraordinary exertions on the part of Mr Hylton, postponed for a few fleeting days; and he purposed sending on his portmanteau to the inn at Milverstoke, himself staying behind to have an interview at the gaol with poor Ayliffe, and possibly his father. As he travelled along, he calmly reviewed the occurrences of the last few days, and agitating and alarming as they were, thought that streaks of light were really beginning faintly to glisten in the murky horizon, and felt devout thankfulness at the prospect of his being permitted to be an humble instrument in the hands of Providence, of rescuing an innocent man from an ignominious death. What, he began to inquire, would be the effect of this respite on the mind and heart of Ayliffe? As they drew near the county town, about ten o'clock in the morning, he pictured to himself the dismal scene which might, but for his exertions, have met their eyes that morning in passing the gaol. As they rolled rapidly onward, he was struck with the numerous foot-passengers whom they met, and in increasing numbers; and at length—how shall it be written?—he almost fell from his seat; for he heard the voice of a person who held a long printed paper in his hand, shouting.

"Why, sir—Parson Hylton—sir"—said the coachman, drawing up hurriedly for a moment, "sir, how's this?—They're crying Adam Ayliffe's last dying speech, and full confession of the murder of Lord Alkmond!"

And sure enough, the man near

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them announced "the last dying speech and confession of Adam Ayliffe, who was hanged this morning for the murder of"—

"Let me get down," said Mr Hylton, faintly, turning deadly pale: "Am I dreaming? What inscrutable dispensation of Providence is this? Have, then, both the special messengers miscarried, after all? or has Lord Farnborough thought fit to overrule the Chief Justice? Oh, horror!" thought he—and all this with lightning rapidity. He staggered towards the man who had the papers, eagerly snatched one of them out of his hand, and found that there was no name of Adam Ayliffe whatever in them. Nor had the crier deliberately falsified the contents of his gloomy documents; but having obtained a number of them to dispose of, and not having heard of the respite which had arrived for the great criminal, whose expected execution was the talk of the county, had taken it for granted that he had suffered in due course; the fact being, that there really had been an execution that morning at the gaol, but only of the two men convicted at the beginning of the Assizes, for stealing the pair of shoes at the fair, and the cheese from the dairy. Poor souls, they had died, it seemed, with great penitence, acknowledging, if not the lenity of the laws, the justice of the sentence under which they suffered; for, indeed, how could they do otherwise, when the cheese and the shoes had been found in their actual possession? Their last moments had been, however, a little disturbed at the sudden, and, as it seemed to them, unjust escape of their expected fellow-sufferer, the murderer; a complaint, as Mr Hylton afterwards learnt from the chaplain, which was one of the very latest among the words spoken by them on earth. The gallows, having performed its deadly office, was being taken down, as Mr Hylton, with averted eyes and a sickened heart, made his way to the gaol through the remains of a far greater crowd than would have been drawn together to witness the exit of the two poor thieves. In answer to his hurried inquiry, how Ayliffe had borne the temporary postponement of his sentence, the turnkey to whom he spoke informed him that the man was pretty well considering, but that there had been a great stir when the news came. Mr Hylton was immediately introduced to the chaplain in the governor's room, and found, to his consolation, that the considerate Chief Justice had caused the respite to be accompanied by an injunction to the authorities to warn the prisoner, that the only use which he ought to make of the few days longer allowed to him on earth, should be to prepare the better for hereafter. No intimation had reached the prison of the grounds on which the respite had been obtained; and Mr Hylton abstained from satisfying the curiosity or anxiety of even the chaplain and governor. With equal discretion, he left the prison without having had any interview with Ayliffe, in order to be spared useless pain, and avoid questions causing an agonising embarrassment. The chaplain had been intrusted with the critical task of communicating to Ayliffe the unexpected result of Mr Hylton's unknown exertions on his behalf; the intelligence arriving only a few hours after Ayliffe, and the two other capital convicts, had partaken of the sacrament. He bore the agitating communication in total silence, but shortly afterwards became wildly excited, in spite of all the earnest cautions of the chaplain, expressing his conviction that, by some providential means, his innocence had been discovered and his life spared; and it was not till after he had become calmer that the official document was shown him, by which his wretched life was extended for one fortnight longer, and *one fortnight only*. Shortly afterwards he became very desponding: and when his father was admitted to him, wept bitterly, and lamented that his troubles were prolonged, and that his peace of mind was endangered. The old man himself had been tenderly and discreetly dealt with, on being told of the respite, by the chaplain; who had already conceived a great respect for him, infi-

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nitely heightened by the firmness and composure with which he received the intelligence, and conducted himself towards his son. With what tempered sternness and affection did he enforce the teaching of the chaplain, and depress the wild and unwarrantable hopes of him who still hung suspended over the grave, as it were, by only one single hair of his head!

Serious and anxious was the frame of mind with which Mr Hylton now rode on to Milverstoke. He felt the fearful responsibility which his energetic humanity had entailed upon him, lest he should have really, in the pregnant language of the Chief Justice, done no more than twice inflict the pangs of death on the convict, and awfully perilled his religious condition. He also thought with momentary trepidation of the Earl of Milverstoke, and the effect upon him which the intelligence of the respite might have had; especially when he should have heard through whose agency it had been brought about; and, moreover, the result of Captain Lutteridge's interview with the Earl, Mr Hylton had yet to learn. On that score, however, his uncertainty, at all events, might soon be relieved, for his way lay within half a mile of the barracks; to which, accordingly, on arriving at the road leading up to them, he directed his horse's head, and rode at a quickened pace. On entering the room in which his interview with the Captain had taken place, that officer quickly made his appearance, in full uniform, his men being drawn up, ready for drill, on the ground opposite to the window; and his manner seemed to Mr Hylton cold and constrained.

"Look you, reverend sir," said Captain Lutteridge, closing the mess-room door after him, "I was as good as my word; went straight to my Lord Milverstoke; and sorry I am that I thought of going. It has done you no service, sir, and I have greatly angered (about which I care not) and grieved my Lord Milverstoke, for which I *do* care greatly."

"I deeply regret to hear it," replied Mr Hylton; "but permit me to ask what was the result of your interview? Are you at liberty to tell me what you went to inquire about?"

"No, sir," answered Captain Lutteridge, peremptorily.

"No!" echoed Mr Hylton, with a dismayed air.

"Not one word, sir!"

Mr Hylton felt distressed and confounded. Here had broken down, suddenly and altogether, one of the props on which rested the precious but precarious fabric of his hopes for Ayliffe. A miserable beginning was this of his fortnight's exertions!

"Perhaps, Captain Lutteridge, you have heard of the respite for a few days, which I have succeeded in obtaining?"

"Yes, sir, last night."

"I trust that you heard with some satisfaction the news that a fellow-creature *may* be spared from suffering unjustly an ignominious death?"

"Sir, I say I heard it, and I wish nobody to die unjustly; but how he can die unjustly, whom the law hath ordered to die, I know not. If this man be hanged when his respite is over, doubtless it will be all right, being according to law. Had I been he, I would rather have had it all over at once, being so near it; now he will die every day till it is over." His words smote the heart of his listener. "For this reason, sir, when a court-martial orders sentence of death, we carry it into effect quickly—the thing is over, forgotten, and the men return to duty."

"But suppose the man shot were not really guilty?"

"That," said the Captain, drily, "never occurred in *my* time."

Mr Hylton sighed: he saw that it was useless to reason with the impracticable soldier, who, moreover, glanced once or twice at his men through the window, as though he wished to mount his horse immediately.

"Pardon me, Captain, as I fear I detain you; but this wretched person's life seems now, in a manner, dependent on *my* exertions!"

"Yes, sir, as doubtless you must have well considered beforehand. But,

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by the way," added the Captain suddenly, "on what grounds did you get the respite, sir? Of course you said nothing of the matter on which we spoke here, sir?"

"Captain Lutteridge," said Mr Hylton, with dignity, "I am a gentleman, as are you; and though a Christian minister, struggling on behalf of one condemned unjustly, as I verily believe, to death, I could not break my promise, though, I own, with a conscience grievously disquieting me at the time, as it has also done ever since."

"I hope quite unnecessarily," said the Captain, with a quaintly-confident air.

"But understand me, sir, when I say this: I must tell you, in candour, but in perfect truth and honour, that, to *some* extent, I made use of the fact that"—

"Hollo! How, sir?—how's that, sir?" interrupted the Captain, his whole face becoming suddenly flushed.

"Hear me, Captain Lutteridge," said Mr Hylton, calmly; "hear what passed between the Lord Chief Justice and myself. I placed my application to him on four distinct grounds; and one of them certainly *related* to what had passed between us"—

"The d—— it did!—I beg your pardon, sir, but by ——! I can't help it, sir, though you're a parson; but"—burst out the Captain, who seemed as if he were going into a frenzy.

"I say, sir," continued Mr Hylton, eyeing him with stern steadfastness, —"that one of those four things related to what had passed between us; only glancing, however, at it."

"Go on, sir! Go on, sir!—If you please, that is," said the Captain, with ill-suppressed vehemence.

"I will, sir, if you interrupt me not," said Mr Hylton, thoroughly roused, and speaking with a deliberate determination which instantly arrested the Captain's impetuosity; but he walked to and fro hastily, his boots clattering, perhaps, a very trifle more than they needed to have done. "I told the Judge that some one in Court had heard him inquire whether any one could say why Lord Alkmond had quitted the Castle at so late an hour of the night; had afterwards communicated with a person, who thought it possible, and only possible, that he might be able to throw some light on the matter, but must first obtain the permission of some one else; was attempting to do so when I quitted Milverstoke; and that, till I received express permission, I could say no more on the business. I also said that the person who had spoken to me had expressed his opinion that the conversation would prove to have no bearing on the case."

"Yes, yes, I did say *that*—I did, I recollect; but, excuse me, reverend sir," he added with a somewhat puzzled air, "I did not quite understand all that went before; 'twas too long: I ask the favour of you to repeat it, sir."

Mr Hylton deliberately repeated what he had said, adding,

"But I never made the slightest mention of Lord Milverstoke, nor you, sir, nor of any one about you; nor spoke of any officer being concerned; nor of this place; nor of Milverstoke Castle."

"Well, sir," said the Captain, apparently relieved, yet evidently not perfectly satisfied, "I suppose that *that* would not give the Lord Chief Justice any inkling, eh? These great lawyers can find out so much more in everything than *we* can.—Eh? how is it, really, sir?"

"You know, Captain Lutteridge, now, as much as I do; and let me add that, in my opinion, this did not form one of the grounds upon which the Lord Chief Justice proceeded in granting the respite; but he went principally on another very remarkable circumstance, freshly"—

"Egad! so one of our men outside there told Lieutenant Wylsden, this morning, that something strange had turned up. What is it, if it please you, reverend sir?" inquired the Captain eagerly.

"Forgive me, Captain Lutteridge; but at present it would be premature," replied Mr Hylton, guessing that good Mrs Hylton must have been talking a little on the subject, since his de-

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parture. "I have yet to ask, did Lord Milverstoke distinctly refuse to allow you to tell me that which you went to ask his leave to do?"

"Sir, I have given you an answer, and cannot go further. I am not at liberty to do what you ask, and will not."

"Did his lordship know of the matter, or did you first tell him?"

"Sir, I shall—that is, sir, I *can* say nothing more than that you get not one syllable on this matter from me: and—harke'e, sir," he added very significantly, "I wish you well out of asking my Lord Milverstoke yourself; but my men, reverend sir, are waiting, and I bid you good morning."

So ended this disheartening interview; Mr Hylton remounting his horse and quitting the barrack-yard much more depressed than he had entered it. He was about to turn back, to inquire of Captain Lutteridge whether he had told the Earl who had gone to London on the business of the respite; but hearing the Captain's loud voice giving the word of command, he abstained, and continued his cheerless exit.

As he neared the village, he overtook an increasing number of persons, who appeared as if they had walked from some distance. The faces of many of them he knew: they saluted him as he quickly passed, with a dash of awe and expectation in their respectful obeisances. He quickened his pace to escape from the gaze of eager scrutiny, and at length increased his speed; but that only added to the excitement of those who beheld and were overtaken by him; and by the time that he had reached his own gateway, he was almost hemmed in by a little crowd, which in a quarter of an hour's time had nearly doubled their numbers; so that he was forced to quit the room again, leaving Mrs Hylton no little excited with what was going on; and approaching his gateway, he assured the crowd, who instantly uncovered and became silent, that Ayliffe had got a fortnight's—and only a fortnight's—respite, because of some little doubts about his guilt; and then Mr Hylton earnestly besought them to go away immediately and peaceably; and was obeyed within as short a time as could have been reasonably expected.

But what had been the first thing which occurred to him on entering the parsonage? A letter lay on the table, unopened, even by anxiously curious Mrs Hylton—it having arrived only some half an hour before her husband's return—bearing a great black coroneted seal, and being addressed to him in Lord Milverstoke's handwriting, with that formidable name at full length, in the corner of the letter. Mr Hylton, with forced calmness, opened it, and read as follows:—

"CASTLE, *Monday*, 8 o'clock, A.M.

"The Earl of Milverstoke requests (the word originally written was visibly '*desires*') the attendance of Mr Hylton at the Castle, as soon after his arrival from London as possible."

Mr and Mrs Hylton looked at one another in silence for a few moments, as soon as they had read this ominously laconic summons, the significance of which they had been hurriedly discussing, at the moment of Mr Hylton's quitting her, to dismiss the little crowd assembled before his door.

"I do not perfectly like the peremptory authoritative tone of this note," said he to Mrs Hylton; "but let us not be quick at taking offence, when none may be intended. As one of his lordship's occasional chaplains, he has a right to command my services; but if he consider that, being his chaplain, I have no right to endeavour to rescue one whom I believe an innocent man from an infamous death, I will, with God's blessing, prove *my* right, and disprove that which he assumes."

"My dear Henry, you will have a terrible scene to encounter, I see too plainly," said his wife, apprehensively.

"Painful, Mary—very, very painful it may be; but what is to *terrify* a man supported by a sense of duty, exercising an unquestionable right, and that, too, in so sacred a cause? My parishioner, Ayliffe, shall not die

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wrongfully, if I can lift up a finger to prevent it, did I live surrounded by forty Lords Milverstoke. If he be one of the great nobles of the earth, think, my Mary, of Him whose servant I am!—whose bidding I do—ay, and will do, though hell itself should rise against me! And in my Master's name, the LORD of LORDS and KING of KINGS, will I encounter this proud Earl, and, it may be, humble him into submission to the will of God, and make him yield to the dictates of our better nature!" Mrs Hylton flung her arms round her husband with fond enthusiasm, and sobbed.

"But, I must say, there are great allowances to be made for him," said she presently. "What would be *our* feelings, dearest Henry, if this loved one of ours—our only one—were"—She suddenly stopped.

"Sweet soul!" exclaimed her father, looking tenderly at the little girl, who was listening absorbedly to this colloquy between her parents; "dear soul! I should wish to accompany thee to Heaven, however black and horrible might be thy path thither! And I would pray for grace to forgive thy murderers; and if I could not get that grace, then wouldst thou, beloved one! be an angel in Heaven, and I, thy unhappy father, be for ever excluded. This my Master hath taught me—this He hath most expressly told me! Come hither, my little Mary, and let me feel thy arms about me, strengthening me in my religion; for of such as thou art, is the kingdom of Heaven!"

The child sprang into his open arms and sobbed aloud; he folded her fondly to his breast, in silence; and Mrs Hylton's tears fell fast. She gazed at her husband with almost reverend love and admiration; for, as he spoke, there beamed upon his harassed features an expression that was heavenly. For him she entertained no fears whatever; she knew his utter devotion to his calling; his lofty sense of the greatness of his office; his unwavering faith; his indomitable courage. She knew well, also, his discretion; his complete command of temper; in short, the simplicity and elevation of his whole character. That minister of God was indeed a burning and a shining light, which, placed on an eminence, would have scattered far a blessed radiance; but a WISDOM unquestionable, and by him unquestioned, had placed him, not on the mountain, but in the valley; had assigned him a remote and obscure station in the great vineyard. But how noble the opportunity of doing good that seemed now afforded him! Already had he felt stirring within him energies, the existence of which he had not known, till they were thus unexpectedly called into action; and at the moment of his thus conversing with Mrs Hylton, he experienced but one serious anxiety—lest the Earl, fatally for his own final peace and happiness, should be permitted to harden himself into hopeless inhumanity, and, in the inscrutable wisdom of the great Orderer of all events, succeed in intercepting the flow of mercy—nay, of JUSTICE: and gloat over the sacrifice of one, as guilty, whose innocence he himself would, however unconsciously, have prevented from being vindicated. Mr Hylton knew the substantial nobleness of the Earl's character, with all the faults which cast baleful shadows around it; and those faults were exactly such as might now be expected in full operation and activity,—hideous serpents writhing around a black pillar of pride. Alas! blind and deadly animosity and revenge would now disguise themselves as retribution and justice! How were they to be unmasked?

To Lord Milverstoke's significant summons, Mr Hylton returned a courteous reply, which was carried back by one of the Earl's servants, who had been sent a second time to know whether Mr Hylton had returned from London. His note simply excused its writer till the evening, at a named hour, on the reasonable and true plea of extreme fatigue from having travelled all night, and also having some matters of importance to transact during the day, in consequence of his sudden absence from home. Lord Milverstoke's, however, was not the

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only letter which had awaited the arrival of Mr Hylton. It seemed that, during the Saturday, Mr Merton, the husband of Mr Hylton's correspondent, who, unknown to herself, had rendered him such service with the Lord Chief Justice, having returned home late on the Friday evening, and perceiving the possible importance of the communication mentioned in Mrs Merton's note, resolved to set off with the letter itself, at an early hour on the Saturday morning, to the parsonage at Milverstoke. He had left the letter with Mrs Hylton, finding the errand on which Mr Hylton had gone to London, whom he heartily wished God-speed; and, moreover, relieved the good lady's anxieties concerning her husband's duty on the morrow, by pledging himself either personally to occupy the pulpit and reading-desk at Milverstoke church, or provide some one who would; which done, he returned home; and it may be as well to say, that he proved able to perform his promise. A crowded and very attentive congregation heard both the morning and afternoon service; their prayers being desired "for one appointed to die, and for others dangerously ill and greatly distressed in mind." Most, if not all of those present, thought only of the condemned criminal, his sick wife, and troubled father; but others bethought themselves also of the Lady Alkmond, lying dangerously ill, and piously included her in their prayers.

Neither the Earl nor Lady Emily made their appearance at the church. There had been a kind of gloomy excitement throughout the village and neighbourhood during the Saturday and Sunday, rising high on its being discovered that Mr Hylton had suddenly gone up to London on behalf of Ayliffe—being supposed to have had very sufficient reasons for so doing. When, however, good Mrs Hylton, in the fulness of her feeling heart, let out to Mrs Wigley, the churchwarden's wife (who told it to her husband, and he to the doctor and surveyor, and they to many others), the purport of the mysterious letter from Mrs Merton, the public feeling quickly rose to a pitch of painful intensity. But when, above all, news came down from London on the Sunday night, by the coach which had passed through the county town, that a respite, or a reprieve, had actually arrived, the feelings which it excited cannot be described. In spite of black appearances, Ayliffe's high character had proved, for a long time, like a buckler against reproach and suspicion, till the trial; when the reported stern concurrence of the Lord Chief Justice with the verdict of the jury, staggered the strongest friend of the convicted. Now, however, that a reprieve had arrived—which was believed to have emanated directly from his Majesty, as a personal act—the tide was entirely turned in Ayliffe's favour, and good Mr Hylton given credit for a very potent influence over the will and pleasure of his sovereign. Hence the excitement which had attended his return—an excitement which would have manifested itself in a less subdued manner, but for a consideration of the peculiar and painful position of the Earl of Milverstoke. The following is an exact copy of the letter, the alleged existence of which had, almost alone, wrung the respite from the hesitating Chief Justice of England:—

"Dunkirk, 15*th March*.

"Reverend Mr Merton,

"Being at this present here, sir, at which place a man of which I had been shipmate in another coaster, of which I am no longer on board, but in another vessel that I am mate of, and the reason of this trouble to you, sir (which have doubtless forgot Jack Jevons, whose mother you knew in Midgecombe), is my seeing the County Paper which he show'd me on Sunday last, where is described the horrid murder of Lord Alkmond by somebody caught, but, reverend sir, perhaps others had hands in it, as this may show and my log-book too which I writ it in at the time, that is that as our boat was rowing back from the shore to the ship, this last was about two miles off, in a line with Milverstoke Castle (S.S.E.) on the exact same

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night of that murder, and the man (his name is Jno. Harrup) heard gun-fire in the wood once or twice near the Castle, and just then saw one or (may be) two men running like for life along the shore to the east, thinking them running away only from sport, because catch'd in the woods, and poaching, Jno. Harrup was only 4 or 5 hundred yards from the shore, which I entered in my log all on that day and Harrup is still here, only we are going up further than this before we return, which will be very soon, and God send us good trading in these quarters, and best respects (and hope of forgiving this trouble) from Rev. Sir, yrs' mo. dutifully; and to command; (the name of this vessel is the *Morning Star*). J. Jevons. (Putting up in London at Wapping, at the *Commodore Anson*)."

Addressed—"The Rev. Mr Merton, Rector of the Parish, Midgecombe."

After perusing and re-perusing this quaint, but, in Mr Hylton's estimation, all-important document, the suspicion hinted at by the Chief Justice, that it might be only some cunning device to mislead justice, flickered with cruel frequency around Mr Hylton's mind. Yet there seemed an authentic air about the letter; and Mr Merton had assured Mrs Hylton, that he distinctly recollected a young man called Jack Jevons living at Midgecombe, about seven or eight years before, but of whom he knew little except that he was the son of a worthy widow (a parishioner of Mr Merton's), since dead, and had run off to sea, to her great displeasure; but Mr Merton had never heard of anything to the disadvantage of Jevons; and, since receiving the letter, had, through inquiries made by one of his servants, heard that Jevons was really the mate of some coasting vessel. However this might be, Mr Hylton's first business was to make an exact transcript of this letter; and then, in performance of his promise, he enclosed the original to the Lord Chief Justice, putting his packet with his own hand, and in the presence of a witness, into the post-office. He also sent by a special messenger a note addressed to Mr Melcombe, an able and experienced attorney, in a neighbouring town, requesting his attendance at the parsonage, at an early hour in the ensuing morning, on a matter of importance; which consisted, in fact, of the energetic prosecution of inquiries concerning the writer of the above letter, and whether or not he had returned to England, or if not, where the ship might now be, and whether, and how, it could be discovered. If Ayliffe's earthly salvation depended on the issue of these inquiries, and within the time already limited, how awfully precarious his fate!

Having had some trifling repose during the afternoon, and partaken of a spare dinner, Mr Hylton ordered his horse to the door; and having made another copy of the letter on which so much depended, he carefully placed it in his pocket-book, and set off, in a pious, firm, and solemn spirit, for Milverstoke Castle, which he reached about seven o'clock. As usual, when he went unattended, he turned off into a by-path which led, at a few hundred yards' distance from the Castle, towards the stables; and there dismounting, gave his horse into the care of a groom, who, hastily transferring his charge to another, ran off at top speed in an opposite direction, while Mr Hylton slowly made his way back into the main path which led to the front of the Castle. He walked thoughtfully along; and on reaching the door by which he usually entered, was spared the trouble of announcing his arrival, by a servant who was stationed there holding the door half open. He raised his finger towards his lips, and then said in a low tone, "The Lady Emily, sir, has given orders that when you arrived you should be conducted into a chamber, for a short time, near her ladyship's apartments, where her ladyship will speedily come to you."

"Tell her ladyship," said Mr Hylton, with some surprise, "that I will await her arrival in any room she pleases, but that I earnestly request her ladyship to come quickly, for I am here on business, doubtless of im-

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portance, with his lordship, and by appointment." He had not sat down more than three or four minutes, and was looking at his watch with fast increasing anxiety, when the door was opened quickly but silently, and the slight, but tall and graceful, figure of Lady Emily entered, and advanced to him, extending both her hands, which were very cold as he clasped them, and her face was deadly pale.

"Dear Mr Hylton, I hear that my papa has sent for you. What is it about?" she inquired with eager apprehension.

"I really *know* not, though I have a suspicion, dearest Lady Emily; his lordship did not say, in his brief note, why he wished to see me. Pray, did he expect me sooner?"

She looked down for a moment, and after a hesitating pause, said, "I believe he did, and was dreadfully angry, I hear, at your not coming earlier."

"Have you seen his lordship today?"

"Only for a moment, early in the morning, but he did not see me; and I never recollect him looking so much agitated. Do you know a Captain Plumridge, or some such name, a dragoon officer at the barracks? He came here on Friday night, very late, I am told. Dear Mr Hylton, what did he come about?" said Lady Emily anxiously.

"I cannot say that I do not know; but he came of his own free will to ask his lordship a question, and I certainly was aware that he was coming."

"Was it"—she trembled visibly—"was it to beg the life of—you know—Mr Hylton—whom I mean?" continued the agitated girl.

"No, it was not, Lady Emily," replied Mr Hylton.

A sudden piercing glance of her lustrous eyes fell upon him, with an expression which he could not at the moment fully understand; and she sighed for some moments in silence.

"Dear Mr Hylton, you know how I love you, and would believe you against all the world," said she, at length, seizing his hand with convulsive earnestness. "Do you think this man ought not to die? Do you think he is innocent?"

"In the most solemn manner I assure you that, whether I be right or wrong, I feel as certain of his innocence as that the sun rose this morning!"

Her bright eyes were fixed upon him with a mournful intensity as he spoke, and her bosom heaved fast.

"Then," she said, in a tremulous whisper, "you will NEVER get my papa to believe it! No, not if you were an angel out of heaven, coming down before his very eyes from the clouds to tell him so!"

"Why, my dearest Lady Emily, why say you so?" inquired Mr Hylton with great earnestness.

"Oh, I *know* it!" she replied, shaking her head; "and I am very, very unhappy after what you have just said; and so will somebody else be, when I tell her"—

"Dear Lady Emily," said Mr Hylton, much moved, "I know whom you mean! And does *she* forgive"—

"Yes, she does! though she knows not whether he be guilty or not of this horrid crime. She has prayed to God, so have I; and though he be guilty, we both forgive him, and do not wish him to die. And if he be *innocent!* Oh, Mr Hylton! *Then* to die! And *my papa* to wish it!"

The low thrilling voice in which she uttered these emphatic words produced an indescribable effect on Mr Hylton.

"You know what a dreadful day we must have looked forward to in this"—she shuddered—"and when we heard last night that it was *not* to occur"—

"My dear Lady Emily," whispered Mr Hylton, "I have no time to explain details; but I must tell you that, since the trial, a fact has come to light tending strongly to show some other hand engaged in this awful business than that of poor Ayliffe! The finger of Providence seems to have pointed

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out some traces, which with His blessing may lead to"—

"Who is that? who is that?" inquired the terrified girl, hastily rising from her chair, and opening the door.

It was her maid, who hurriedly whispered that she had just heard that his lordship had ordered horses to be got ready to go instantly to the parsonage.

"I must leave you; you must go to my papa directly!" said she, with a face full of alarm.

"I will, dear Lady Emily"—

"And oh, consider his feelings!"—her eyes filled suddenly with tears.

"I do! I will!—my heart bleeds for him! I fear he will be exceedingly angry with me for what I have done."

"I fear he will!" sighed Lady Emily; "but—think of *us* when you are with him! and do not, for worlds—no, not for worlds—let him know that I have been with you!" Then she hastily took from her bosom a small black-edged packet, and put it into Mr Hylton's hands: "You will know what to do with this," said she earnestly: (it contained a £10 bank-note). Another moment and she was hastening along, followed by her maid, to Lady Alkmond's chamber; and Mr Hylton proceeded round to the front door, and ringing the bell, was quickly admitted, and walked with firm step and yet firmer heart, following one of the attendants who had ushered Captain Lutteridge into the Earl's presence, and who, now opening the library door, announced Mr Hylton, and, on his entry, instantly withdrew.

"So, sir," said Lord Milverstoke in a low hoarse voice, rising from his chair, his eyes flashing the moment that he saw Mr Hylton, "you have robbed the gibbet of its due, to-day!" Mr Hylton slowly approached, with a respectful inclination, towards a chair which seemed to have been placed for him, but remained standing beside it, and spoke not, observing the fearful excitement under which the Earl was labouring: "I say, sir, you have robbed the gallows this day! you have made groans rise from the grave of the murdered!" said the Earl, with a vehemence of manner to which Mr Hylton had never seen, or even imagined, an approach.

"I hope not, my Lord," he commenced gravely.

"I say you have, sir! The dead in their graves are crying out against you!"

"God forbid, my Lord! Nay, God forbid!" repeated Mr Hylton.

"Blood crieth out from the ground!—And you have dared to interfere to defeat the vengeance of Heaven!—Presumptuous!"

"You are labouring, my Lord, under great excitement; let me implore of you to endeavour to calm yourself, and I will respectfully and readily answer anything which your lordship may demand of me. Recollect, my Lord, that I have come willingly to attend your lordship"—

"What have you been doing, sir? You, having a sacred duty to me and my family, being at present one of my chaplains, sir, have bestirred yourself—have busied yourself—have gone about—to save the forfeited life of the guilty—of him who did his endeavours to blast me and my house—him whose accursed body was forbidden to pollute the grave! Yes, sir, such was the voice of the laws of your country! such the voice of justice! and you—*you* forsooth!—have dared to step forward and disobey and defeat that law, and pervert that justice! What sir!" the Earl started forward a step or two nearer to Mr Hylton, who moved not, "would you, then, have that blood-stained monster let loose upon *me?*—Am I—are I and mine—henceforth to skulk in terror from the light of day, for fear of the assassin? Oh! hideous!—You ingrate! you meddling priest!—There stand you, calm before my madness! madness which you are bringing upon me!—which I feel coming upon me—and all at the bidding of one who was bound religiously to me and mine!" The Earl stepped back and threw himself down on the couch; the veins of his forehead were swollen; he shook perceptibly, and uttered a groan that seemed rending

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open his breast, while his eyes were fixed upon those of Mr Hylton, who stood in an attitude of respectful firmness. "Why speak you not, sir? Have you then no defence?—no excuse? Do you really stand there, sir, and defy me?"

"Oh no, my Lord! no! I take God to witness how my soul is torn at beholding you; fearful as is your language to be heard by a Christian, and a Christian minister"—

"Bah! talk not, sir, to *me* of your Christian character!" thundered the Earl. "Where was"—

"Your lordship means not to insult me, or outrage my sacred office," said Mr Hylton, with solemn composure; "too well I know your lordship's lofty character. When you are calmer, you possess a soul loving justice; to that soul I appeal—for that calmness I wait; I will then render full account of everything, even the smallest matter that I have done"—

"Now, sir! now! the present moment! You shall have no pretence, sir, for contriving evasive answers, or cunning subterfuges! Sir, there is a seat beside you! Mr Hylton—I request you—I beg—I desire—you to be seated. Begin! begin, sir!—I am calmer—I am calmer than I was—calm I never shall be again—my soul is shaken by your misconduct—your cruelty—your perfidy!"

"If, my Lord, you desire me, as distinctly as I may, to give an account of my doings, in this unhappy business, I will at once"—

"Well, sir!—at last, then!—but remember, sir, two things I demand!—explain *the past!* forbear *for the future!*—to those two, sir, address your words!"

"Have I, then, my Lord, really free speech? Hear me first, my Lord, and afterwards, if you choose, dismiss me hence as you will, with whatever indignity, with whatever reproach!"

"Oh! I am all ear, sir! all attention!" exclaimed Lord Milverstoke, with an exhausted look, his eyes fixed heavily on those of Mr Hylton, who, with a dignified bearing and a presence of mind which had never for a moment deserted him, inclined towards Lord Milverstoke with a countenance full of respect and sympathy, believing now that the fearful storm had spent its chief violence.

"Having leave, my Lord," he began with quiet deliberation, "from one who never once broke his word, that I know of, and who, I verily believe, from his high nature, cannot, I will speak as becomes one man to another, in the presence of Him who made us both, and orders every event that ever happened or can happen, however mysterious and awful, His nature being such. I will speak as though I might never again speak here, nor enter this Castle. I acknowledge the duty I owe your lordship, one that, humble and imperfect as may be my mode of doing it, I would earnestly desire to do, to the end of my days,—or to the end of your lordship's will and pleasure. It was I that buried your dead out of your sight, my Lord, and in that awful moment was so moved by your majestic sorrow, that I scarce could perform my sacred functions." Lord Milverstoke's eyes fell to the ground for a moment, and his lips quivered, but manifestly with no intention to speak, and Mr Hylton's voice slightly trembled: "When you quitted that burial-place, these eyes followed you, and I breathed a humble prayer to Almighty God, that He who had broken, would heal your heart—a prayer that has seldom since been absent from me, or forgotten when I offered up my own supplications. My Lord, this most cruel, this barbarous and most bloody murder, is hideous at this moment in my eyes, as in your lordship's: the vengeance of Heaven, of Him to whom vengeance belongs, will assuredly light upon the head of him who did this deed, be it sooner, be it later, than man may look for; and I pray God that such vengeance, if it be His will, may be swift. Now crave I your lordship's most absolute word and promise to be performed, while I say but little more. I know not that I ever knowingly broke my own word, or spoke that which I

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knew to be false; and so I now tell your lordship firmly, even though a thousand torturing racks were stretched in readiness before me, I believe in my soul, in my soul of souls, that this wretched man, Adam Ayliffe, is innocent of this deed, for which he is nevertheless doomed to die!" Lord Milverstoke started from his chair, his breast heaving suddenly and violently, and he walked to and fro for a few moments in silence, while Mr Hylton proceeded:—"I believe that had he been able, and had had the opportunity, his giant strength would have slain a thousand who had raised a hand against the precious life of your son; ay, or of any one else."

"Oh! insupportable!—intolerable!" vehemently muttered the Earl through his closed teeth, as he paced to and fro before Mr Hylton—looking, however, away from him, as if resolved not to interrupt him.

"I deliberately acknowledge that, as the case was proved at the trial on Friday last, no other verdict than Guilty would have been just"—

"Oh! what candour!" muttered the Earl to himself, with a kind of bitter fury.

"So said, as doubtless your lordship has heard, the Chief Justice of England; so said the jury; so said all who heard: there, had it stood, I would, had I been so required, have done mine office towards the dying guilty, nor dared to meddle with his righteous doom. My Lord, these eyes saw, these ears heard, that wretched convict, when first he was thrust manacled and fettered, and blighted by the curse of his sentence, into the cell where he awaited, and, I fear, still awaits, an ignominious and unrighteous death. In that terrible hour, believing himself thenceforth beyond the help of man, did he solemnly avow himself innocent. I believed him then, and have ever since; and I believe him *now*."

"How long—how much longer all this drivel?" quoth the Earl to himself, as if nearly bursting through all self-control.

"But not on my mere belief, nor any man's mere belief, could the verdict which has been given be shaken. Yet have I gained, with efforts which nothing could have induced me to make, but a conviction that I obeyed the will of God, a brief and precious respite for this wretch. I have striven—I have been in long and mortal struggle with the excellent and just Chief Justice, and laid such cause before him as forced his righteous mind to delay this death. And for the grounds—the reasons—these am I ready to lay before your lordship, if so your lordship pleases." Mr Hylton paused, and bowed.

"Ho, then at length my lips are loosed!—is it—even—so?" said the Earl. "And I may speak? and am able to speak, not being choked with all the nonsense that I have been hearing, and I hope, for your sake, sir, that even you yourself have forgotten! So, the idiot chatter of the convict-cell—but"—the Earl with a great effort restrained himself—"but state, sir, such reasons, such grounds, as you have urged—state, I say, your pretences—false I know them!—sir, sir, I ask your forgiveness! Language unjustifiable and unbecoming has passed from these lips—I crave forgiveness, sir! Scarce know I sometimes what I say or think. But, sir, in mercy to me, tell me briefly why—why the law falters about this death, and so stultifies its most solemn doings in so few days, before all mankind?"

"My Lord, such reasons as I alleged satisfied a reluctant Judge; but only so far as to grant delay. No glimpse of mercy—of pardon—was there in his gloomy face; but this brief delay he granted for inquiry."

Here Mr Hylton produced the copy he had made of the letter which he had forwarded that day to London, and explained briefly how and when he himself had received it. Then he read it to the Earl with deliberate emphasis, observing his lordship give a slight start when the running of the two men along the shore was mentioned; but he seemed instantly to recover himself, and heard Mr Hylton

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read, without interrupting him, to the end. Then Mr Hylton observed, on quickly glancing at the Earl, an expression of withering scorn flit instantaneously over his agitated features.

"And that wretched scrawl has delayed this day's justice, and satisfied the powerful mind of the Chief Justice. Sir, I tell you he must be a dotard! He should be removed! He deserves impeachment! I will in my place in Parliament impeach him!"

"Sees then, really, your lordship nothing in all this?—no reason even for pausing—for considering whether it may not be possible to trace out the guilty and save the innocent? Oh, my Lord, not one single fortnight, before the tree be felled, which, once felled, must lie for ever as it falls!"

"Who sees not, sir, that this your letter is a transparent device—a forgery—an imposture—a practice upon your credulity? And are keys such as these henceforth to open our prison-doors? Oh, horrible, horrible mockery!"

"The writer, my Lord, is known—known to one whom your lordship knows—the Rector of Midgecombe—a gentleman, surely, and of honour and veracity."

"Oh, how can I patiently hear you, Mr Hylton," said the Earl reproachfully, and with infinitely greater calmness than he had till then manifested, "seriously urging on me such despicable drivelling—for *is* it not such? Will that paper of yours bear an instant's scrutiny? And is it to be the potent instrument of letting loose again on society—oh, I shudder! I sicken! Why, sir, how long is justice to be thus befooled? How long must we wait till these persons—sir, the mere stating of it shows the monstrous absurdity of your proceedings. Your feelings pervert your judgment and disturb your understanding, sir. A false pity makes you credulous and cruel: credulous are you to the guilty: cruel are you to the innocent: cruel to the living: cruel to the memory of the dead!"

"No, my Lord! The dead may be in spirit present with us at this moment—hearing and seeing, or *knowing* how the truth is—oh, my Lord, my Lord!"—Mr Hylton said all this very solemnly, and saw that the Earl was for a moment startled by the thought which had been suggested to him. "And beware, my Lord, lest you yourself be credulous of guilt where guilt is not. Is it not worse than being credulous of innocence where innocence is not, but guilt? This last is an error reparable; the other irreparable; and an account thereof must be given hereafter. I speak with the liberty and authority of my office. I come not unbidden before you; I intrude not on the retirement of grief. But you call me hither; and, as a messenger from my Heavenly Master, I stand before you, and plead against this your precipitate judgment of your fellow man. 'If thou, Lord, shouldst mark iniquity, O Lord, who should stand?' To Him all things are known, even our most secret sins; quite forgotten, it may be, by ourselves; unknown to any living; but marked and remembered by Him! all seen by the unsleeping Eye!"

The Earl remained silent; his face suddenly went of a ghastly whiteness.

Mr Hylton proceeded:—"Awful is this visitation of his Providence—like a thunderbolt hath it fallen upon you. Humble yourself under the mighty hand of God! Think not of vengeance, which is His, and He will repay it! How know you His object in all this? or the cause of it? That there is some deep mystery hanging over this fearful occurrence, I in my conscience do believe. It may be one never to be solved on this side of the grave," proceeded Mr Hylton, who *felt* that his words were sinking into the heart of the agitated listener. "I have myself reason to suspect—perhaps to fear—that something strange and solemn may yet come forth from all this; yet to me all is now darkness. My Lord, I ask your pardon; I did not hear what your lordship said," continued Mr Hylton, observing that the Earl asked him some question.

"I know not, sir," said he, in a low, subdued tone of voice, and with a strange apprehensive expression of

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countenance, "what you wish to convey to me. What do you mean, sir? What are you alluding to?"

He paused, and Mr Hylton remained silent, from several considerations.

"Did you, sir," said, presently, the Earl, "send Captain Lutteridge to me as an emissary to torment me, and"—he stopped, evidently suffering under strong emotion.

"My Lord, I did not send Captain Lutteridge hither; he proposed it himself; he refused, from a scruple of honour, to disclose some matter which yet he said had happened, or, if I understood aright, something that had been said at your lordship's banqueting-table before"—

"Have you seen him, sir, since your return?" said the Earl faintly.

"I have, my Lord."

"And what said he?"

"That he had seen your lordship; and he simply refused to give me any information whatever, or to give me any cause for his withholding it."

The Earl sighed heavily. "And tell me, sir, did you found on anything that had fallen from him, any plea urged before the Chief Justice?"

"My Lord, I was forced to quit Milverstoke"—

"I know, I know that, sir. But give me an answer! Give me, sir, an answer to my question!—candid and true, I know, from your character, that such answer will be."

"I repeat, my Lord, that time pressed upon me, I may say, mortally. I saw the Captain but for a short time; he refused to tell me aught that had passed at your lordship's table, without your lordship's express permission, which he said he would get refused, or granted, before I quitted for London; but, to my infinite concern, the coach came before he did, and I quitted by it, or my mission had been useless. Under these difficulties, my Lord"—the Earl listened with agonising earnestness—"I did most undoubtedly say to my Lord Chief Justice solely this, that I might possibly be able, hereafter, to show him some reasons for the Lord Alkmond's having quitted the banqueting-table, to go into the wood as he did; but I mentioned not names nor places, least of all those of your lordship; neither did I in any way suggest or insinuate them."

The Earl eyed him all the while that he was saying this gloomily. "Do you, Mr Hylton," said he, "believe Lord Milverstoke, when he asserts or denies anything?"

"Most absolutely, as I would that your lordship would so believe me."

"Then, sir, I tell you that I verily believe it to be beyond all question, that the brief conversation which Captain Lutteridge represents as having taken place at my table, had no connection whatsoever with the frightful occurrence which has reduced me to—that which you see before you. Yet, sir, would I not have such matters talked of, giving occasion, as possibly they might, to vulgar scandal and gossip, and offensive and hurtful speculation and wondering. But, sir, is it possible that the Chief Justice laid stress on such matter; and founded upon it, in any degree, his respite?"

"I know not, my Lord, for he said not; he told me with a face which, ever since, I have seen frowning before me, that he was all against me! and that, in a manner, I took the proffered respite at my peril—on peril, that is, of making the prisoner twice die."

"Think not, sir, from what I have said in this matter," said the Earl, with an exhausted air, "that I consent to this foolish respite; I think it a foul perversion of justice, and of most horrid example!"

"I was hoping, my Lord, that milder and better thoughts were rising up in your mind!"

"Draw not false consequences, sir, from appearances. Methinks I seem calmer than when we met; but, believe me, sir, my heart seems dead within me, and my mind may perish at any instant. I feel my soul failing me. Things that you know not, revived by what you have been saying, are well-nigh maddening me: I can now no longer think or talk. Leave me, Mr Hylton; but be assured, my will is inflexible, my judgment uncon-

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vinced — utterly untouched by anything that you have urged."

"Still would I ask your lordship to listen to the other ground on which I pressed my precarious suit with the Chief Justice. Mr Lord, I have reason to believe that—without desiring to impute anything of wilful misconduct to one of the principal witnesses, he was seriously mistaken, at least, in attributing to the prisoner that which he has ever strenuously disclaimed—ill blood to your lordship, or any member of your family. That witness stated that this unhappy man, and even his father, had long entertained malignant feelings towards your lordship."

"So they have, sir! I know it!" interrupted the Earl, fiercely: "but why am I to be dragged into these matters? Am I to sit in judgment on every paltry perversion of proved facts, subsequently thought of by the condemned and his friends? No more of it, sir! No more of it, sir! I will hear nothing: blood glares before my eyes! the cry of it is in my ears! Leave me! leave me, sir! and pursue, if you will, your insane efforts to cheat the gallows finally of its prey!—to bring again to Milverstoke your injured, your pious parishioner! Oh! it is maddening! Sir, I would be alone!"

"I take my leave, then, my Lord, thus laden with your bitter, but I feel unjust, reproaches; my conscience being clear and void of offence to God and man, and dictating my duty. That duty I must and will do, my Lord, caring for consequences nothing whatever."

"Good even, sir, good even!" interrupted the Earl, impetuously, and with a miserable countenance; and bowing in silence, Mr Hylton withdrew, greatly oppressed; inwardly bewailing the Earl's sufferings, but more his unchristian temper; desponding for the issue of his own enterprise of mercy and justice, but with no trace of exasperation or irritation for the many harsh expressions and imputations which had been levelled at him by the proud, infuriate peer.

That night slept good Mr Hylton in deep, sweet sleep, forgetful of all things—alike of bodily fatigue, of mental anxiety, and the bitter, impassioned reproaches to which he had listened, with manly and Christian forbearance, just before retiring to rest. Him they disturbed not sleeping, whom, when awake, they had not provoked to forgetfulness of whose minister and servant he was; whose work he had to do; whom he had hereafter to appear before, and show how that work had been done!

It cannot be exactly told how it came to pass, but there seemed a sort of tacit understanding, that evening, among the leading inhabitants of Milverstoke, that they should confer together on the matter of the respite; and one by one they dropped into the parlour (a large, yet snug and simple-fashioned one it was) of the Blind Hound—for so had the inn at Milverstoke been immemorially called, owing to an ancient tradition in the Milverstoke family. While Mr Hylton was engaged in his exciting interview with the gloomy lord of the Castle, the parlour of the Blind Hound was well-nigh filled. The doctor had felt it his duty to call upon the churchwarden, Mr Wigley, a man whom he had most thoroughly cured at least a fortnight before, and who being somewhat, it might possibly be, imprudently, at the Blind Hound, thither vigilantly followed him the doctor; and they two were incontinently joined by at least six or eight others.

"There's no getting over the blood on coat and stick—there oughtn't to be, and therefore there can't, and so there's the end of all *that*, Mr Wigley," said, in a peremptory and authoritative tone, Mr Glynders, the farrier, whose professional services were often required at the Castle.

"Well, *nay* now, say I; nay, saving your better knowledge, Mr Glynders," quoth Mr Wigley — a most devoted admirer of the parson's—"why may it not be true, as the poor man said at the trial, that he did stumble in fright over a body that had been murdered by another?"

"Pho! so would get off every mur-

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derer," replied Mr Glynders haughtily. "I stand with my Lord Chief Justice, and he said 'twas all gammon, and quite impossible to be true; and he was right!"

"Why," said Mr Muddle, a small farmer, very modestly, "saving your presence, Mr Glynders, I do remember something that, if you please, I will mention. Do you, gentlemen, any of you recollect Nick Gould having me up at Sessions, two years ago, for an assault? He showed the Justices a shirt of his, with blood on the neck and wrist, and swore I did it with my fist, when nobody else was by: he was believed, and I fined. I, knowing all the while it was a cruel and false lie, and perjury—for I fetched no blood, striking him only on the shoulder, and kicking him elsewhere (as I would again, were he to do again what he then did), — hows'ever, I paid the money, and be hanged to him; and, three months afterwards, over his cups one night, he owned the blood was that of a pig he'd killed just before!"

"Now, why can't it be so here, Mr Glynders?" said Mr Wigley, replenishing his pipe; "answer that."

"Because it *can't*—that's flat," replied Glynders dogmatically.

"Alas! Mr Wigley," said the doctor, "though I'm a bit shaken about this case, I don't see how that matter of Mr Muddle squares with this, seeing that there it was merely pig's blood, and none of man at all; whereas here, 'tis owned by Ayliffe to be the blood of poor Lord Alkmond past all dispute; so there's no likeness between the two cases."

"Yes, to be sure, that is so; and what I was going to say, doctor," said Mr Glynders. "So now you've had your say, Muddle; and a pretty one 'tis!"

Mr Muddle modestly went on smoking in silence, inwardly owning that he was quite vanquished, but not distinctly seeing how that had been effected by Mr Glynders. Here there was a pause.

"I wonder," said the doctor, "what any one of us would have done had he been in Ayliffe's place—gone to do as he said he did—and, stick in hand, lit on the bloody body?"

"I should have tried to revive him, or see if he were really dead," said one.

"I should have hollo'd out, Murder!" quoth another.

"So should I," said a third.

"I should have shouted, and run for help"—

"I should have listened for steps," said several in a breath.

"And suppose," said Mr Wigley, "you'd heard some one coming after you while you were running, and had suddenly thought how ugly and black it might seem against you—adad, if I'd thought of all that, I'm thinking I should have done as Ayliffe did, and been glad enough to get clean out on't."

"And a stick, with blood on it, in your hand, too, would be a nice companion to get home and be caught with," quoth Glynders.

"Nay, nay; you're too hard on poor Ayliffe," said one.

"Suppose he'd thrown the stick away, and it had been found bloody, wouldn't that have been worse?"

No one answered this, for it seemed so convincing; till Mr Muddle somewhat timidly said, "No; why, it might be said some one else had done it with Ayliffe's stick!"

Here was another pause; whereupon, "You see, gentlemen," said Mr Glynders, dignifiedly, "How wrong you all get, when once you go beyond my Lord Chief Justice and the jury. Depend on't they're always right, or it's no use having judge and jury."

"That which troubles me most in the business," said the doctor, "is what all this has brought on poor old Ayliffe and young Mrs Ayliffe. Better people never lived in this country, that ever I heard of; and as for the old man, he's brought up his family better than most of us."

"Well, no one says *he's* done anything wrong, and much is he to be pitied," said Mr Glynders; "yet 'tis proved he had a terrible grudge against my Lord and *his*."

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"What!" said Mr Wigley, "old Adam Ayliffe!—my life on't, 'tis false!" And all present, but Glynders, eagerly echoed his words. "Never did Ayliffe do hurt to any man, woman, child, beast, bird, or any living thing."

"By the way, sir," interposed Mr Wigley, addressing the doctor, "how comes on poor Mrs Ayliffe—is she likely to get over it?"

"No, I fear not; the illness that she was in, from the sudden fright, brought her direct to the grave's edge, and there she has been ever since. A single puff may blow her in, as it were!"

"So is it with the Lady Alkmond at the Castle, as I surely hear," said Mr Glynders, somewhat sternly; "and what can signify Adam Ayliffe's wife to that poor lady?"

"Make not comparisons, Mr Glynders, I beseech you," said the doctor, who had been himself occasionally in attendance on Lady Alkmond, in addition to two physicians (one of them of great eminence from London, and another from the neighbouring town), and the resident family physician. "Surely God hath afflicted both, and the one is as innocent, and as much to be pitied, as the other."

"What! where the one's husband—bless the poor lady—died unjustly, and the other's will die justly?"

Here was a pause.

"I wonder what my Lord Milverstoke says to all this," exclaimed one; and added, addressing Mr Glynders, "What say you, Mr Glynders? We should like to hear."

"I never mention what happens at the Castle," he replied impressively. "But thus much I may say—his lordship desires only the thing that is right to be done; which is, that this man Ayliffe should suffer."

"'Tis a dreadful thing to hear one's-self told, with one's own ears, that one's body's to be dissected and anatomised!" said one, and there was a perceptible shudder throughout the room.

"I hope it won't come to that," said the doctor mildly; "but if the thing *is* to be, why, I must say"—he paused suddenly, and added, in a different voice—"it surely does not signify much—does it?—what is to become of the shell, if the kernel's safe; and I think I know," he continued, dropping his voice to a lower tone, "those who will have the anatomising of poor Ayliffe; for what *must* be must be, and there's no use mincing things—is there?" he asked, looking round with a melancholy shake of the head. But every face looked blank—no one answered; for before the disturbed mind's eye of each arose the dismal object of a skeleton—the skeleton of one whom all of them had familiarly known for years as a man frank, good-natured, high-spirited, ready to oblige everybody, of spotless character till this questionable charge, and who, while they were talking, lay, as it were, alive in death—his manly limbs heavily ironed, his heart broken.

"There's a deal of work to be done this next few days by those who have got this respite—isn't there?" said one.

"It will all come to nothing, you'll find, this that was heard of, about a man seen running away," said another. "I suppose it's that which gained the respite, but those must be sharp who have the catching of that same man during the fortnight. I should like to know what said the King on the subject, when Mr Hylton saw his Majesty?"

"*He* never saw the King—not he," said Mr Glynders, somewhat sneeringly.

"*Didn't he!*" echoed Mr Wigley confidently, and somewhat peremptorily—for he being churchwarden, and in frequent communication with Mr Hylton on parish business, and indeed on many other matters, felt that he had a right to appear better informed than others of his movements; and the grander they appeared, the more elevating, of course, to Mr Wigley. His significant "Didn't he!" seemed conclusive; and after some other conversation of a general nature, the party was about to break up, when the landlord announced that Mr Hylton had just called, on horseback, as he passed, to inquire whether Mr Wigley were there; and on learning

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that he was, had ridden on, leaving word for him to come at once to the parsonage, as Mr Hylton had something to say to him. Mr Wigley, on hearing this, looked important, yet changed colour a little; and all present silently gave him credit for being as high in the counsels of the Vicar as he had been intimating. And to be sure, shortly afterwards, Mr Hylton, all fatigued and depressed in body and mind as he was, gave Mr Wigley half an hour's audience; and then put him upon making many inquiries, early in the ensuing day, concerning a point connected with the great murder case, which Mr Wigley inwardly wondered had never before happened to occur to any of the very astute party at the Blind Hound. His ears also tingled a little at a chance-word falling from Mr Hylton, which dissipated into thin air the notion of his having seen the King on the matter; but that good Mr Wigley perhaps justly deemed unnecessary to be again alluded to elsewhere, and besides, seeing the King's minister personally was, after all, in a general way, exceedingly like seeing the King himself.

CHAPTER XI.

The first thing that Mr Hylton did, in the morning, was to attempt to follow up the inquiries suggested by the mysterious letter from the mate of the Morning Star: taking such means as occurred to him, to ascertain whether any one living near the sea-shore had noticed anything unusual on the eventful night in question; or anything which, when originally observed, might have appeared unimportant, yet, on being now minutely inquired into, might become of pregnant significance. Then his thoughts directed themselves, in his dire dilemma and perplexity, towards a question which he dared hardly even propose to himself:—Could any one have had any imaginable motive for killing Lord Alkmond? Scarcely venturing to follow up the shadowy possibility, yet led on irresistibly by the vague and mysterious character of what might have taken place at, or immediately after, the banquet on that fatal evening—he thought within himself, as he stood in his little library, "Had the unfortunate young nobleman, in an unguarded and guilty hour, yielded to headlong passions, and lit up in the hearts of others the fires of intense and unappeasable malignity and revenge? But, indeed, how could that degrading suspicion be entertained in the case of a young nobleman, situated as he was—more especially at that particular period—coming down at a season of exulting family festivity, accompanied by his beautiful Viscountess, and his cherished little son and heir? Had, nevertheless," — for Mr Hylton felt such an awful sense of responsibility upon him as compelled him to do with his might what his hand had undertaken to do—and to let no false delicacy, no improbability even, however glaring at first sight—prevent him from exhausting every possible supposition—"had Lord Alkmond so far forgotten himself, in a moment of licentiousness, in a temporary God-forgetting recklessness, as to incur the blasting guilt of ruining female virtue, and turning into fiends those interested in protecting or avenging it? If not at, or near, Milverstoke, had such miserable occurrence happened elsewhere; and had the bloodthirsty avenger tracked his unsuspecting steps, and lain in wait for him. Why was Lord Alkmond at all in the

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woods at such an hour on such an occasion?" Mr Hylton almost started in trepidation at the possibilities which he was conjuring up around him—the fearful figures with which he was peopling his disturbed and morbidly active fancy. For that *something* had occurred, and of a very peculiar nature, was evident from what little had dropped from Captain Lutteridge and the Earl himself; the latter being—and, indeed having owned himself—greatly distressed and agitated about the matter, and having peremptorily forbidden both Captain Lutteridge and Mr Hylton to utter a syllable about it to any one.

"But let me not," said Mr Hylton, almost aloud, "let me not wrong the noble and innocent dead, in order to protect even the wronged, and innocent, and mortally-endangered living! To the winds with such injurious and cruel suspicions!" Yet, struggle as he might, he could not quit the dismal train of thought into which he had seemed forced; and his speculations received a fresh impetus, on its suddenly occurring to him, that he had heard of the young Lord's having been, for some time shortly previous to the fatal occurrence, in low and troubled spirits; and Captain Lutteridge had distinctly told him that, whatever was the subject which had been introduced into the conversation, it had disturbed Lord Alkmond to a pitch that was absolutely intolerable, and he had been, apparently, incapacitated from presenting himself at least till after some interval, intended for recovering his spirits, in the ball-room. Into the woods he had gone, and to a considerable distance from the Castle; and he could not have been long absent, before being murdered by the hand of frightfully ferocious violence. Had the fatal blow been struck by the persons who were represented as having been seen running along the shore? and had they intended to slay Lord Alkmond? or had they mistaken him for some other person? If so, *for whom?* Had his lordship unexpectedly encountered poachers, and, owing to his dress, in the gloom of the night, been confounded with some obnoxious keeper? Or had he, with the spirit of a soldier, endeavoured to resist and capture any person, and been suddenly felled to the earth by some one behind? Or—horrid thought, haunting Mr Hylton in spite of all that had occurred in the condemned cell—had, as suggested by the Lord Chief Justice, the blow been really struck by Ayliffe, under the belief that he was inflicting it on Hundle, the perfidious informer against him? Or was it possible that Lord Alkmond had gone out into the wood *by appointment*—a supposition that seemed to the last degree improbable. With whom? For what? And at such an hour, and on such an occasion? If Ayliffe had gone into the wood in the way which he had represented, how knew he that Hundle would be there? And had Hundle been there that night? After being long tormented by these and many other perplexing conjectures, Mr Hylton anxiously asked himself the question—whether, if, at the fortnight's end, the case should stand as it did at that moment, he could then offer any valid reason whatever, why the sentence of the law should not be carried into effect? For what would there, in such case, be, to extricate Ayliffe from the rational presumption arising out of his appalling proximity to the deed, in point of both time and place, as had been established to demonstration—but his own unsupported assertions? Would there be really doubt enough to warrant a further suspension of the sentence? Mr Hylton sighed, and inwardly answered in the negative. Had he, then, been guilty of precipitation? For surely very guilty would be such precipitation: and of that guilt all would convict him, however unjustly, by the adverse issue of his exertions. Alas! if he had nourished hopes but to be blighted! How heavy and thankless his responsibility! Accused on every side: by the prisoner, and all who pitied and wished him well; by Lord Milverstoke, and those interested in the prosecution; by the public, roused on behalf of justice!

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Greatly disturbed was he by these doubts and fears; yet he felt consoled by the conscious purity of his motives, his perfect disinterestedness. Nay, was he not acting directly against his own worldly interests, in thus making a mortal enemy of the Earl of Milverstoke? This last, however, was a consideration which gave him not an instant's concern. And for the rest, he had from the first besought, and continued faithfully to seek, the aid of Heaven, and its guidance in all his doings; wherefore he felt a supporting consciousness of being engaged upon his duty, resolved to shrink from no suffering or sacrifice, whether foreseen or not; to leave no effort untried; *to work while it was day; for the night came in which no man might work.*

He felt an almost insuperable repugnance to visiting poor Ayliffe, during the pendency of these critical proceedings. What questions might he not ask?—questions, the not answering of which might prove as fatally delusive as the answering disingenuously; and as to equivocation of any sort, under any circumstances, it was a thing impossible to Mr Hylton—lest of all, as a minister of religion, and towards a death-doomed fellow-creature. And with reference to Mr Hylton's present object, what useful information had he to expect from Ayliffe? There seemed but one subject on which Mr Hylton could with any advantage question him: and yet, when considered, how ineffectually, whatever might be the answer!—and that was, concerning the reason which Ayliffe had had for expecting to meet with Hundle in the wood, on the particular night when he went thither. But, as the case stood, what signified that reason, however satisfactory and conclusive? except, indeed, as tending to negative the notion that he had gone thither with any feelings of hostility towards Lord Alkmond, whom, nevertheless, he might have mistaken for the object of his own particular vengeance. But Mr Hylton received one brief message from the unhappy occupant of the condemned cell, which no man, least of all such an one as Mr Hylton, could disregard!—"I go back into darkness while you are away!"

On this, "Poor soul!" said Mr Hylton, ordering his horse, "I will quickly be with thee!"

As he rode along, his mind lost sight almost entirely of the temporal in the spiritual, the present in the future interests of the condemned; and by the time that he had reached the gaol, his mind was in an elevated frame, befitting the solemn and sublime considerations with which it had been engaged.

A turnkey, with loaded blunderbuss on his arm, leaned against the cell door, which he opened for Mr Hylton in silence, as he approached—disclosing poor Ayliffe sitting on his bench, double-ironed, his head buried in his hands, his elbows supported by his knees. He did not move on the entrance of Mr Hylton, as his name had not been mentioned by the turnkey.

"Adam! Adam!—the Lord be with thee! Amen!" exclaimed Mr Hylton, gently taking in his hand one of the prisoner's.

Ayliffe suddenly started up, a gaunt figure, rattling dismally in his irons; and grasping, in both his hands, that of Mr Hylton, carried it to his heart, to which he pressed it for some moments in silence, and then, bursting into tears, sunk again on his bench.

"God bless thee, Adam! and *lift up the light of His countenance upon thee!* Put thy trust in Him: but remember that He is the All-Seeing, the Omniscient, Omnipotent God, *who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity!*"

Ayliffe wept in silence, and, with reverent affection of manner, pressed to his lips the still-retained hand of Mr Hylton.

"Come, Adam! speak! Speak to your pastor—your friend—your minister!"

"You seem an angel, sir!" said Ayliffe, looking at him with a dull, oppressed eye, that was heartbreaking.

"Why an angel, Adam? I bring you," said Mr Hylton, shaking his head, and sighing, "no earthly good news whatever; nothing but my un-

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worthy offices to prepare you for hereafter! Prepare!" continued Mr Hylton, with an awful solemnity, "prepare to meet thy God, for He draweth near? And who may abide the day of His coming!"

"I was readier for my change when last I saw you, sir, than now," said Ayliffe, with a suppressed groan, covering his face with his manacled hands.

"How is that, poor Adam?"

"Ah! good sir! I was, so it seemed, half over Jordan, and have been dragged back. I see not, now, that other bright shore, which made me forget earth! All now is dark!"

His words smote Mr Hylton to the heart. "Why is this? Why should it be? Adam!" said he, earnestly, "have you ever been, can you possibly ever be, out of God's hands? What happens but from God? And if He hath prolonged this your bitter, bitter trial, what should you, what can you do, but submit to His infinite power and goodness? *He doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men, to crush under his feet all the prisoners of the earth! He will not cast off for ever; but though He cause grief, yet will He have compassion according to the multitude of His mercies!*"

"Oh, sir! oft do I think his mercy is clean gone for ever! Why—why am I here?" he continued, with sudden vehemence. "He knoweth my innocence—yet will make me die the death of the guilty? That cannot, *cannot* be just!"

"Adam!" said Mr Hylton, earnestly, "Satan is indeed besieging you! Even if, in the unscrutable decrees of Providence, you be ordained to die for what you did not, have you forgotten that sublime and awful truth and fact, on which depend all your hopes—the death of Him who died, *the just, for the unjust?*"

Ayliffe's head sunk down on his knees.

"Ah, sir!" said he, tremulously, after a pause, during which Mr Hylton had not interfered with his meditations, "those words do drive me into the dust, and then raise me again higher than I was before!"

"And so, verily, they ought, Adam! Is there a God? Has he really revealed himself to us? Are the Scriptures true? Am I the true servant of a true Master? If to all this you say, *yea*, speak not again distrustfully. If you do, if you so think, then are you too like to be beyond the pale of mercy. I am free, Adam,—you are bound,—yet are both our lives every instant at the command and absolute disposal of Him who gave them, that we might be on trial here for a little while. For aught I know, I may even yet die before you, and with greater pain and grief; but both of us must surely die, and much of my life is gone for ever. As your frail fellow-mortal, then, I beseech you to listen to me! Our mode of leaving life is ordered by God, even as our mode of entering into, and living in it. To some He hath ordained riches, others poverty; to some pleasure, others misery, in this life; but all for reasons, and with objects best known, nay, known only to Himself! Adam, you have now been four days here beyond that which had been appointed you: now that we are alone, have you aught to confide to me, as the minister for whom you have sent? What saith my Master? If you confess your sins, He is faithful and just to forgive you; but if you say that you have no sin, you deceive yourself, and the truth is not in you. And if that last be so, Adam, what shall be said of you, what can be hoped for you?"

"If you be thinking, sir, of that deed for which I am condemned," said Ayliffe, with a suddenly radient countenance, "then am I easy and happy. God, my maker, and who will be my judge, knoweth whether I speak the truth. Ay! ay! I am as innocent of this deed as you are!"

"It is right, Adam, that I should tell you, that all mankind who know of your case, from the highest down even to the lowest, do believe you guilty."

"Ah, sir, is not that hard to bear?" said Ayliffe, with a grievous sigh, and a countenance that looked anguish unspeakable and insupportable.

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"It is, Adam—it is hard; yet, were it harder, it must be borne. Here is Lord Milverstoke, who hath lost his son, his only son, the heir to his title and his vast possessions—lost him in this mysterious and horrid way: is not *that* hard to be borne? And now, Adam,—I ask you by your precious hopes of hereafter,—do you bear animosity towards him who believes you to be his son's murderer?"

There was an awful silence for nearly a minute, at the close of which Ayliffe, with an anguished face, said,

"Oh, sir! give me time to answer you! Pray for me! I know whose example I ought to imitate; but"—he suddenly seemed to have sunk into a reverie, which lasted for some time; at the end of which,—"sir—Mr Hylton," said he, desperately, "*am* I truly to die on Monday week? Oh, tell me! tell me, sir! Life is sweet, I own!"

He sprung towards Mr Hylton, and convulsively grasped his hands, looking into his face with frenzied earnestness.

"I cannot—I will not deceive you, Adam," replied Mr Hylton, looking aside, and with a profound sigh. "My duty is to prepare you for death; but"—

"Ah!" said he with a desperate air, "I am to be hanged like a vile dog!—and every one cursing me, who am all the while innocent!—and no burial service to be said over my poor body!—never—*never* to be buried!" With a dismal groan he sunk back, and would have fallen from the bench, but for Mr Hylton stepping forward. "Sir—sir," said Ayliffe presently, glaring with sudden wildness, "did you see the man at the door, with the blunderbuss? There he stands! all day! all night! but never comes in!—never speaks! Would that he would put it to my head and finish me in a moment!"

"Adam! Adam! what awful language is this that I hear?" said Mr Hylton, sternly. "Is this the way that you have spoken to your pious and venerable father?"

"No! no! no! sir!"—he pressed his hand to his forehead—"but my poor head wanders! I—I am better now! I seem just to have come out of a horrible dream. But I should never dream thus, if you would stay with me—till—all is over!"

Feeling it quite impossible then to ask the miserable convict such questions as he had wished, Mr Hylton resolved not to make the attempt, but to do it as prudently and as early as might be, through old Ayliffe, or the chaplain or governor of the gaol. He was just about to leave, and was considering in what terms he could most effectually address himself to Ayliffe, when, without any summons having issued from within, the door was unlocked, and the turnkey, thrusting in his head, said, "I say, my man, here's the woman come with thy child, that thou'st been asking for. They'll be let in when the gentleman goes."

Ayliffe started up from his seat with an eager motion towards the door, but was suddenly jerked down again, having forgotten, in his momentary ecstasy, that his irons were attached to a staple in the floor.

"Come, come, my man," said the turnkey sternly, "thou must be a bit quieter, I can tell thee, if this child is to come to thee."

"Give me the lad! give me the lad! give me the lad!" said Ayliffe, in a hoarse whisper, his eyes straining towards the approaching figure of the good woman, who, with a sorrowful and apprehensive look, now came in sight of the condemned man.

"Lord bless thee, Adam Ayliffe!" she began, bursting into tears: "Lord love thee and protect thee, Adam!"

"Give me the lad!—show me the lad!" he continued, staring at her, while she tremblingly pushed aside her red cloak; and, behold, there lay in her arms, simply and decently clad, his little boy, awake, and gazing, apparently apprehensively, at the strange wild figure whose arms were extended to receive it.

"Adam, father of this thy dear child," said Mr Hylton, in a soothing manner, interposing for a moment be-

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tween Ayliffe and the child, not without some alarm, "wilt thou handle it tenderly, remembering how feeble and small it is?"

On this poor Ayliffe turned to Mr Hylton with a face of unutterable agony, weeping lamentably; and still extending his arms, the passive child, eyeing him in timid silence, was placed within them. He sat down gently, gazing at his child for some moments, with a face never to be forgotten by those who saw it. Then he brought it near to his face, and kissed incessantly, but with unspeakable tenderness, its tiny features, which were quickly bedewed with a father's tears.

"His mother!—Oh, his mother!—his mother!" he exclaimed, in heart-rending tones, still gazing intently at the child's face, which was directed towards his own with evident apprehension. Its little hand for a moment clasped one of the cold irons that bound its father, but removed it immediately. The father, seeing this, seemed grievously agitated for some moments; and Mr Hylton, who also had observed the circumstance, was greatly affected, and turned aside his head. After a while,

"How easily, my little lad, could I dash out thy brains against these irons," said Ayliffe in a low desperate tone of voice, staring wildly into the child's face, "and save thee from ever coming to this unjust fate that thy father hath!"

Mr Hylton was excessively alarmed, but concealed his feelings, preparing, nevertheless, for some perilous and insane action of the prisoner's, endangering the safety of the child. The gathering cloud, however, passed away, and the manacled father kissed his unconscious child, with all his former tenderness.

"They'll tell thee, poor lad, that I was a murderer! though it be false as hell!" muttered Ayliffe, fiercely—"They'll shout after thee, 'There goes the murderer's son!'" He paused—and then with a sudden start, said in a hollow tone,—"There will be no grave for thee or thy mother to come and cry over!"

"Adam," said Mr Hylton, very anxiously, "weary not thyself thus—alarm not this poor child, by thus yielding to fear and despair; but rather, if it can remember what passeth here this day, may its thoughts be of thy love, and of thy gentleness and piety! If it be the will of God that thou must die, and that unjustly, as far as men are concerned, He will watch over and provide for this little soul, whom He, foreseeing its fate, sent into the world."

Ayliffe lifted up the child with trembling arms, and pressed its cheeks to his lips. The little creature did not cry, nor appear likely to do so, but appeared the image of mute apprehension. The whole scene was so painful, that Mr Hylton was not sorry when the governor of the gaol approached, to intimate that the interview must cease. The prisoner, exhausted with violent excitement, quietly surrendered his child to his attendant, and then silently grasped the hand of Mr Hylton, who thereupon quitted the cell, the door of which was immediately locked upon its miserable occupant—who was once again *alone!*

The inquiries which Mr Hylton had caused to be set on foot, with reference to Hundle, proved to be unproductive. What, indeed, had been the precise object which Mr Hylton had proposed to himself in making them, beyond partially corroborating the statements made by Ayliffe himself at the trial, and whenever he had been interrogated on the subject, that he really had had reason to believe that Hundle was to be in the woods, on the evening when Ayliffe had gone to lie in wait for him? When questioned on the subject, the prisoner said that he had ascertained the intended visit of Hundle, by happening to overhear a conversation between him and another, both of whom had agreed to be in the wood in quest of game, as Ayliffe understood, on the memorable evening in question; and it had unhappily occurred to Ayliffe, that this would afford him a fitting opportunity, no

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only of severely chastising Hundle, but of subjecting him to the severe penalties of the law against poaching, by detecting and capturing him in the very act. Mr Hylton secretly hoped that Hundle might have absconded in consequence of Ayliffe's statements at the trial; but when Mr Wigley rode over to the village where the man resided, for the purpose of making the desired inquiries concerning him, he was found engaged in his ordinary employment of a farmer's day-labourer, one which it seemed that he had never suspended since the disastrous occurrence which had led to the inquiry. He totally denied, and with an astonished air which impressed his interrogator, that he had ever made any such arrangement for going to the wood as had been alleged by Ayliffe, or that he had ever dreamed of doing so; and declared that he was at his own cottage during the whole of the evening in question, as his mother also emphatically affirmed. He admitted that he had acted a shabby and cruel part towards Ayliffe about the hare, but pleaded the distress of himself and his mother; and, when asked how he could have supposed that one in such circumstances as those of Ayliffe, could possibly pay any portion of the expected fine, said that he had heard of Ayliffe's having high friends, who would not see him in trouble for a pound or two; and mentioned the Vicar of Milverstoke as the chief of such friends, having heard Ayliffe himself speak of that reverend gentleman in terms of impassioned gratitude and respect. Hundle offered to be confronted with Ayliffe, at any moment, on the subject in question, and voluntarily accompanied Mr Wigley in quest of the person whom Ayliffe alleged to have concurred with him in his projected expedition; but the man had, some ten days before, it seemed, gone to another part of the country. The only practical result, then, of these inquiries was, so far from being in any degree corroborative of Ayliffe's statement, to give it a flat contradiction; which unspeakably disheartened and distressed Mr Hylton, tending to paralyse his humane exertions—nay, even somewhat to shake his confidence in Ayliffe's truthfulness and innocence.

The day after that on which Mr Hylton had received this dispiriting information, he resolved to see Ayliffe, and probe his conscience on the subject. Two little incidents occurred to him, on his melancholy ride from Milverstoke to the gaol, which, though insignificant in themselves, yet made a lasting impression upon him. On reaching the cottage in which poor Ayliffe's child was living, he dismounted, in order to make his usual weekly payment out of Lady Emily's bounty; and on entering, found there his good wife, Mrs Hylton, with his little daughter, who was in the act of putting, with childish excitement of manner, a small silver token into the hand of the child; who, though incapable of appreciating the gift, yet smiled upon the little giver with what appeared to Mr Hylton to be an expression of ineffable sweetness. "And this is the child of the reputed murderer of Lord Alkmond!" thought he; and a tear came into his eyes, and he sighed deeply. As he rode along, that poor child's countenance accompanied him, pleading hard in favour of its miserable parent!

When he had gone about two-thirds on his way, he saw at a distance the figure of a man, sitting on a milestone, just under a tree—and who should this prove to be but old Ayliffe! He was not for some time aware of Mr Hylton's approach: the wind, which was very bitter, coming from an opposite direction, and the old man sitting in a sad and thoughtful attitude, with his eyes bent upon the ground. Mr Hylton stopped for some moments to look at him, much moved, and even startled by the coincidence which had happened—that he, going to see the death-doomed son, in whom his confidence, till then so firm, was beginning to be shaken, should have encountered both the son and father of the condemned, each under circumstances so touching and unlooked-for.

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Mr Hylton had come up with Ayliffe before the latter seemed aware of his approach; and to his arrested eye, the old man's countenance appeared invested with an aspect of grandeur. There might be seen in it gloom and grief; a certain stern composure and dignity, speaking of nature's own nobility. And he had, withal, an appearance so utterly poverty-stricken! And his features were so pallid and wasted!—He had walked upwards of five miles from his cottage to the gaol; and his wearied limbs required the rest which he was taking—the book which then lay upon his knees being also somewhat weighty for an old man's carrying so far.

He was bringing, he said, in answer to Mr Hylton's inquiries, his own old Bible, to read out of it to his son, at his earnest request; and intended to leave it with him during the few remaining days of his life. "There is no difference in Bibles, sir," said the old man with sorrowful deliberation of manner, "so each be the pure word of God—that I do well know; but *this* one will my poor son weep precious tears to see; and I shall weep grievously over it, after he is gone!"

"My excellent, my pious friend," said Mr Hylton, "I go this day again to see your son; but with heavy heart. How fast is wearing away his time! and yet I make no advance towards his rescue, or pardon! No, not one step! And assuredly I do believe that he will die on the day now appointed by the law!"

"The will of God be done, sir!" exclaimed Ayliffe, taking off his hat as he spoke, and looking reverently and awfully upwards.

"I grieve to tell you, Adam, that I can do nothing with my Lord Milverstoke, in the way of getting him to say that he doubts, be it never so little; or of prevailing on him to recommend to mercy."

The old man covered his eyes with his hand, and shook his head sadly. After a long pause—"Sir," said he, speaking in a low broken tone of voice, "he was a father, as *yet* I am. Some short while ago, he thought as little to lose his only son, as did I to have mine taken horribly from me, as he will be, a few days hence. Yet who hath ordered both these things but Almighty God, whose creatures we all be? And if his lordship doth verily believe that my son slew his, who shall wonder if he think it right that my poor son should die, according to the law of God and man! But as for me, my days are now few and bitter, and this is like to close them somewhat sooner than they would have been. Yet have I not read this Book, which I have here, in vain; and I bear malice to no man. Alas! my poor son's own sin first led him into the way that brought him down into this horrible pit; and God is just, His doings are never to be questioned; and if the punishment seem to us beyond the sin, that matter leave I humbly to God, who will one day make plain what he hath done, and why. And often think I what may be said for God's reasons in permitting this young noble to be slain, whom verily I believe my poor son slew not! Soon, sir, to all appearance, must they meet face to face, and in the presence of God; and for such meeting do I daily strive to prepare my son!"

All this was said, with some few intervals of silence, uninterrupted by Mr Hylton, who listened to the speaker, and gazed at him with thrilling and awe-subduing thoughts. "This man," said he to himself, "has not read that blessed Book in vain! And oh! that I, with all mankind, might so read it!"

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CHAPTER XII.

On his return to the parsonage that evening, after a brief but affecting interview with the prisoner, who with unvarying and calm consistency reasserted the truth of his statement concerning Hundle, and evinced a sensible improvement in the tone of his feelings,—as his hopes diminished, his resignation increasing,—Mr Hylton found Mr Melcombe impatiently awaiting his arrival, with intelligence of a sufficiently exciting character, which had come from London by that afternoon's coach, in a letter from Mr Melcombe's agent. The latter gentleman was a skilful and experienced man; and instantly on receiving Mr Melcombe's instructions, in a case so calculated to excite his interest and stimulate his energies, had taken the best practicable means of becoming acquainted with the arrival at London, or any other port, of the Morning Star. But, above all, he had stationed a clerk, of tact and vigilance, near the Commodore Anson tavern, at Wapping, with instructions to discover and announce the arrival there of John Jevons, or any other person belonging to the Morning Star. The merchant to whom that vessel belonged had been discovered by Mr Melcombe without difficulty, through information afforded by Mr Merton; and from such owner had been ascertained, beyond a doubt, the following highly satisfactory, and apparently important information:—That the Morning Star must, on the day in question, have been passing that part of the coast where Milverstoke Castle was situated; having quitted the port to which she belonged on that morning, and with a fair though intermitting wind; that John Jevons was the mate; that there was on board a sailor named Harrup; that the place usually frequented by the sailors, in London, was the Commodore Anson; and that the destination of the vessel had been that which the letter specified. Why, however, the vessel had lain-to when opposite Milverstoke Castle, except it had been becalmed—and why, moreover, the boat, with Harrup in it, had gone ashore, or whether, indeed, such a fact had happened at all, the owner knew not; but aware of the cause of the inquiries which were being made on the subject, had promised to afford every information in his power, and at the earliest moment. Now the letter which Mr Melcombe had brought from London, was from his agent, announcing the arrival, on the preceding evening, of the Morning Star; the discovery, late on the same night, at the Commodore Anson, of Jevons, the mate; and that the writer had obtained an appointment from the Secretary of State, at his office, for the ensuing morning—when he would be in attendance with Jevons and Harrup!

Mr Hylton was so overjoyed and excited by this bright gleam of sunshine (for such he esteemed it) that Mr Melcombe was forced to remind him of the slight importance which, after all, might be attached to these circumstances, by the high authorities in whose hands lay the fate of the prisoner. Mr Melcombe was not so sanguine a man as Mr Hylton, and of course better acquainted with the practical administration of justice; and when, by means of what he said, there appeared before Mr Hylton's mind's eye, as it were, a pair of scales, in one of which were the proved and

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admitted facts of the case—and in the other this mere possibility and ground for conjecture—the latter scale seemed alas! instantly to kick the beam. Had there been time, Mr Hylton would have started for London to be present at the all-important interview. That, however, being impracticable, he was obliged to wait for information by due course of post; and, to be sure, on the morning but one after the receipt of the above intelligence, Mr Hylton rode over to Mr Melcombe's office, and read with him the following deeply interesting letter from his London agent, Mr Burnley:—

"In the matter of Adam Ayliffe, Junior.

"Pomegranate Court, Temple, *7th April.*

"Dear Sir,

"I have just come from the Secretary of State's, where we have had an interview of considerable length, but not (I regret to say) of so satisfactory a character, as far, that is, as concerns the prisoner's interests, as could have been desired. His lordship is a man of few words, but those prodigiously to the point, and he showed himself perfectly acquainted with the whole facts and bearings of the case. Considering the present troubled state of public affairs, and the anxiety they occasion, this is greatly to be praised. Mr Under Secretary was present, and also paid close attention, and asked several keen questions. The two men, Jevons and Harrup (who were had in separately), behaved very properly, though they were somewhat flustered at first; but Jevons, on seeing the letter, said at once it was his, and explained why he wrote it; and Harrup said just what it was to have been expected, from the letter, that he would say—namely, that he saw two men running along the shore, near the water's edge; one of whom, he thought, ran faster than the other: he could not tell what sort of clothes they wore, nor whether they carried anything with them: and on seeing them, and hearing shots above in the wood, and thinking them poachers, he lay on his oars for a moment, and sung out 'Hallo, my hearties!' When he had said the substance of all this, my Lord asked him the following pertinent questions: 'Do you know Adam Ayliffe, or any of his family or friends?' The man said that he had never even heard of the name—nor ever been at Milverstoke. 'How soon after your return to the vessel did you mention to the mate, or to any one else, the things which you have just told us?'—He answered, directly that he had got on deck, when he said, 'There's been sport going on in yon woods.' 'Why had you been ashore?'—He said, to try to get some carpenter's tools; having left several of their own behind them, at the port. 'How long had you left the shore, when you saw the men running?'—'About a quarter of an hour.' 'In what direction were they running?'—'Easterly—towards the east.' 'Would that be as if they were going away from, or towards, the wood?'—'Going away from it.' 'Does the wood come close down to the shore, or are there cliffs?'—The man could not say; but Mr Under Secretary said he knew the place himself well, and whispered something to his lordship which I could not hear. 'Did the man who ran appear to be tall or short?'—He had not taken sufficient notice, and it was also too dark to do so. 'Did you think anything more about this matter after mentioning it to the mate?'—No; till he afterwards heard it talked of. 'When was that?'—When they were at Dunkirk. 'Who mentioned it, and why?'—The captain brought a newspaper on board, and spoke to the mate, and they both looked at the log-book, and called him (Harrup) down, and reminded him of it. 'Who first told you of the matter when you came back to London?'—Then he mentioned my clerk, as I explained to his lordship. 'Was it before or after the firing of the gun that you saw the man running?'—He thought it was within a very few minutes after. 'How many minutes, do you believe?'—Perhaps four or five; or it might be less. 'Did you hear a gun fired more than once?'—He thought twice, but it might have been even three times. 'What hour of

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the night might this have been, as nearly as you can recollect?'—'About ten o'clock.' Then Harrup was ordered to withdraw. 'Has there been any reward offered by Lord Milverstoke or the magistrates, for the discovery of any one connected with the transaction?' asked his lordship of me; and I answered 'No.' Before Jevons was brought in, his lordship asked me, very particularly, what inquiries we had made at Milverstoke, to ascertain whether any one near the sea-shore had observed persons running on the occasion in question. I told him what we had done, reading him your last letter to me, announcing that you could learn nothing on the subject. When Jevons was called in, he gave, as I have already said, a clear and plain account of how he came to write the letter, disclaimed all knowledge of the Ayliffes, and knew but little of Milverstoke. Neither he nor any one on board had heard the sound of gun-shot from shore. His lordship asked, very quietly, two or three acute questions, designed to detect any material difference between the accounts of those parts of the transaction which both must have observed; but I never heard any person answer more satisfactorily than Jevons did; it could have left no doubt in any one's mind, that whatever might be the *value* or effect of the evidence, it was given truly and *bona fide*. Then Jevons was ordered to withdraw; and, after a few moments' silence, his lordship said, addressing Mr Under Secretary and me —'All that we have just heard might, had it been known at the time of the trial, possibly have been fit to lay before the jury; but they might have deemed it immaterial or irrelevant, or as showing only that possibly others were concerned, *with the prisoner*, in the murder—they escaping, and he happening to be detected: his guilt being, of course, in either case the same. But the persons represented as running along the shore may have had nothing whatever to do with the murder, nor known anything about it: what a slight foundation,' these were his lordship's words, 'for so large a superstructure! The Lord Chief Justice, however,' continued his lordship, 'will be seen, and shown the notes of what has taken place this morning (a clerk had set down everything as it went on); and, in the mean time, those two persons who have been here to-day should be forthcoming, if required. I think it right to intimate to you,' said his lordship to me, 'for communication to the prisoner's friends, that, as I am at present advised, I see no grounds for delaying, beyond the period now fixed, the carrying into effect the sentence of the law. I regard the evidence adduced at the trial as of rare cogency, and, in truth, irresistible. There is, however, one matter not mentioned to-day, on which it is desirable to communicate with the Lord Chief Justice; and in the mean time you will be pleased to leave here the address of the clergyman who has taken so much interest in this case, and who called on me and on the Lord Chief Justice upon this subject.' From his lordship's manner, I should not be surprised if the reverend gentleman were to have a communication made to him respecting some matter which he may have mentioned to the Lord Chief Justice. The moment that I have anything new, you may rely on hearing from me: and meanwhile I am,

"Your very faithful servant,
"JONATHAN BURNLEY.

"P.S.—As you intend to take no costs in this case, nor shall I—regarding it as a matter of humanity. At the same time, if funds be provided by those well able to afford it, I think it would be not unreasonable for both you and me to be reimbursed the money which we may actually expend on the occasion, but, equally with yourself, I will not hear of anything further."

The "matter not mentioned to-day," to which the Secretary of State had referred, Mr Hylton perfectly understood; and the allusion to it threw him into a brief but extremely anxious reverie. He had not felt himself at liberty to communicate the point to which Lord Farnborough must have

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alluded, to Mr Melcombe, whose inquiries concerning the matter on the present occasion he easily parried. Both he and Mr Melcombe were somewhat dashed in spirit by the foregoing letter. Neither of them could deny the weight which there was in the Secretary of State's observations. As for the prospect of being able to extort from Lord Milverstoke an explanation of the mysterious conversation at the banqueting-table, and, above all, permission to communicate it to the Secretary of State, Mr Hylton had regarded it as being quite as much out of the question as procuring his lordship to join in a recommendation to mercy. Ought he, indeed, under all the dreadful circumstances of the case, to be pressed upon such a subject? It required no small amount of firmness even to contemplate making the effort. Momentous as were the interests which a strong sense of duty had impelled Mr Hylton to take into his keeping—the saving an innocent man from the blighting death of the guilty—he nevertheless could not regard the unfortunate Earl of Milverstoke otherwise than as an object of profound sympathy; as one whose grieved and harassed heart should not be assailed with rude intrusiveness, but approached with the delicacy and deference due to the terrible sufferings with which it had pleased the wisdom of God to visit him. If Mr Hylton verily believed in Ayliffe's innocence, he remembered that it was still in a somewhat daring disregard of all those appearances and facts which abundantly justified, not only the Earl of Milverstoke, but every dispassionate impartial person, in believing Ayliffe to be really guilty of that cowardly and savage murder, of which he had been openly, and fairly, convicted by a court of justice. What father might not be expected to act similarly, if similarly situated? To the Earl, Mr Hylton had himself most expressly admitted, that if he had felt satisfied of Ayliffe's guilt, he would not interpose to shield a murderer from that punishment with which the law of both God and man visited his crime. Mr Hylton had brought himself to disbelieve in Ayliffe's guilt; but how was he to bring to that conviction the cruelly bereaved father, the Earl of Milverstoke? To attempt to coerce an understanding so clear and powerful as his? For, indeed, of this Mr Hylton sometimes feared that his efforts were falling but little short. Yet he inwardly disclaimed, as equally absurd, insulting, cruel, and hopeless, all design to influence the feelings of Lord Milverstoke, independently of his judgment. Mr Hylton was justly entitled to place much reliance on his own understanding, which was really of a superior order; yet he often apprehensively asked himself what degree of confidence was he now—at this late stage of the affair—warranted in reposing in his own judgment, running counter as it did to that of the Lord Chief Justice and the Secretary of State, neither of them surely incapable of forming that judgment, or biassed by partiality or any assignable improper motive whatever; both of them, moreover, being men of high intellectual power, of great experience, and most humanely disposed. Fortified by their unshaken conclusions, did not the Earl of Milverstoke stand as it were upon a rock; and might he not well be excused for repulsing Mr Hylton's pertinacious efforts with a kind of impatient scorn and indignation? These were reflections occasioning him increasing anxiety and misgiving, especially with reference to what he feared to have been the unauthorised use which he had made, with the Lord Chief Justice, of Captain Lutteridge's intimation concerning an alleged occurrence at the Earl of Milverstoke's own table, and which it was sought by Mr Hylton to connect, in spite of representations to the contrary, with the death of Lord Alkmond. How injurious and unwarrantable must not this appear to the Earl! and this, too, as he saw by Mr Burnley's letter, the Lord Chief Justice had communicated to the Secretary of State; who seemed, in consequence of it, evidently about to take some step or other which might place Mr Hyl-

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ton in a position of greatly aggravated and alarming embarrassment and responsibility. And his fears were abundantly justified by the event; for, on the morning after Mr Melcombe's visit, Mr Hylton received by post a letter, wearing an official aspect, addressed "To the Rev. Henry Hylton, at the vicarage, Milverstoke;" with the name of the Secretary of State, "FARNBOROUGH," in the corner, sealed with his seal of office, and bearing the authoritative words, "On His Majesty's Service.—*Immediate.*" A little fluttered by the sight of this formidable missive, Mr Hylton withdrew with it into his library, where he opened it, and read as follows:—

"LONDON, 15*th April.*

"Reverend Sir,

"I am directed by Lord Farnborough to communicate with you upon a matter of considerable difficulty, and also of pressing urgency; as it relates to the case of a prisoner, Adam Ayliffe, capitally convicted at the last Assizes for your county, of the murder of the late Lord Viscount Alkmond, and now awaiting execution on the 18th instant, having been respited till that day by the Lord Chief Justice, in consequence of representations made by you to his lordship, on the day ensuing that of the sentence. Lord Farnborough has bestowed the greater attention on this case, in consequence of the illness and absence from London of the Lord Chief Justice, with whom, however, his lordship some days ago fully conferred on the subject. And I am now to recall to your recollection one particular ground proposed by you to the Lord Chief Justice for delaying execution on the prisoner. You represented, in a very confident manner, that if time were afforded, you might be able to discover the existence of facts at present enveloped in mystery, the tendency of which was (unless you have been misunderstood) to connect the death of the deceased Lord Alkmond with matters which were not brought to notice at the trial. You are further reported to have intimated, that the persons able to afford such information are of rank and station, indisposed to speak of the matter at present, from scruples of delicacy, fearing the imputation of a breach of confidence. You also further stated, that the person to whom you had already spoken, and promised again to apply, had expressed an opinion (in which you yourself, as you stated, had heard sufficient *to prevent your concurrence*) that the information, when obtained, would prove to have no bearing on the case, relating though it did to the late Lord Alkmond's quitting Milverstoke Castle at a very unusual hour, and under very unusual circumstances, for the wood in which he was so shortly afterwards found murdered. I am directed to draw your most serious attention to the responsibility attaching both to persons making these communications, and to those who have it in their power to prove, at once, that these suggestions and representations are either well founded or totally groundless. A peculiarly painful responsibility is, moreover, thus cast on those whose duty it is to direct the administration of justice, and advise his Majesty in a matter of life and death. As a clergyman and magistrate, you need not be reminded of what Lord Farnborough is entitled to expect from you under these critical circumstances; and you are requested, without a moment's delay, to furnish his lordship with such information as may be acted upon, one way or the other. And Lord Farnborough directs me to inform you finally, that in the absence of any further communication from you, or of intelligence, relating to this subject, of a nature decisively favourable to the prisoner, the present respite will not be extended.

"I have the honour to remain,
"Reverend Sir,
"Your very faithful and most obedient servant,
"J. C. L. WYLMINGTON.

"The Reverend Henry Hylton,
"Vicar of Milverstoke."

"'*The present respite will not be ex-*

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tended!'—Oh! words of portentous significance!" exclaimed Mr Hylton aloud, in a despairing way, as, having finished reading the letter, he leaned back in his chair, in dire dismay and perplexity. What had sprung up out of his own unjustifiable precipitation! for by no gentler name could he then characterise what he had done in making to the Lord Chief Justice the communication of which that eminent and conscientious functionary had felt it his duty to apprise the minister intrusted with the executive authority of the State; and whom the above letter of the Under Secretary showed to have been plunged into deep anxiety by such communication. One of the first things that recurred to Mr Hylton's recollection, was the Earl of Milverstoke's peremptory and emphatic assurance to him, that the matter spoken of by Captain Lutteridge could have no bearing whatever upon the question of the prisoner's guilt or innocence: and so had, in the very first instance, said Captain Lutteridge himself! Had it thus become Mr Hylton's duty, without harassing the Earl any more, to act upon his deliberate assurance, and write off to the Secretary of State, frankly abandoning as untenable the plea for delay which had called forth his lordship's letter? But suppose he should do so, Ayliffe be executed, and it were to be afterwards discovered that the matter in question *had* a bearing, and a vital bearing, upon the question of his guilt or innocence—showed that whoever else might have committed this mysterious murder, Ayliffe had not; and that he had been hanged in spite of his vehement and unwavering denial of guilt and assertion of innocence, and without a stain on his previous character to lend colour to so frightful a charge as that in respect of which he had unjustly suffered? Was not that a possibility sufficient to make the most stout-hearted man shudder? Was, then, Mr Hylton again to importune the Earl upon the subject? to show him the letter from the Secretary of State? and leave with his lordship the painful responsibility of withholding the desired information? Suppose he should demand from Mr Hylton, why he had not at once conveyed to the authorities, with whom he had been so busily communicating, the Earl's own deliberate and emphatic declaration on the subject?

Mr Hylton was a courageous man, and of inflexible firmness of purpose; yet he comtemplated another interview with the Earl with grave, very grave, anxiety. Fear he knew not; but what was not due to the feelings of the father of a murdered son? And had not Lord Milverstoke movingly acknowledged to him that, though the conversation of which he was in quest had no bearing on the dreadful murder of his son, yet was it so connected with other associations and recollections as to occasion his lordship exquisite pain in adverting to it? Again; had not the Secretary of State addressed to him weighty matter; and was he not entitled to the prompt and decisive answer which he had demanded; and the refusal or neglect to afford which, would plainly absolve him from all kind of responsibility, and a thousand-fold augment that which already rested upon others? Again: Mr Hylton was beginning to regard with intense disfavour and repugnance this attempt to extort and divulge private conversation, that which had passed in the unrestrained freedom of fancied security, the confidential intercourse of private life. It required the conviction of some positive and overwhelming necessity to overcome such feelings in the breast of a gentleman—and a gentleman, indeed, and of pure and high feelings, was Mr Hylton. But all this while poor Adam Ayliffe was lying in irons, broken-hearted, and drawing nearer HOURLY to the ignominious agonies and horrors of the scaffold! *What was to be done?* indeed. Mr Hylton, conscious of the purity of his motives, and yet perceiving the thick darkness which seeemd to lie upon the path of duty, humbly commended himself and his proceedings to God, and besought His assistance, that he might not, from mistaken motives, be blindly and

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rashly attempting to thwart the will of Providence; and instead of furthering the ends of justice, frustrate and pervert its efforts to attain them. For suppose, after all, that Ayliffe were falsely protesting his innocence, had really slain Lord Alkmond in mistake for another, or — horrid thought! — had, through Mr Oxley's proceedings, fallen into a mortal frenzy of hatred against the Earl of Milverstoke and his son, and resolved to wreak his vengeance on both or either as opportunity offered? How many had gone to the scaffold as loudly protesting their innocence as at present did Ayliffe, and concerning whose guilt there yet never was even a shadow of doubt! Distracted by these considerations, he folded up the letter, placed it in his pocket-book, ordered his horse, and resolved to go straightway and take counsel with quiet and judicious Mr Melcombe. After having gone a little way past the road which led to the barracks, "Why," said Mr Hylton to himself, suddenly stopping his horse —"Why should I not try my fate again with Captain Lutteridge?" He remained stationary for several minutes, and then, turning his horse's head, rode up to the barracks; resolved to read to the Captain the letter of the Secretary of State, and see what new view of the case it might present to that straightforward and well-meaning officer. The Captain received him with a sort of bluff caution; that of a plain unsuspecting man, who, feeling that he had, somehow or other, got himself into difficulties on former occasions, was now at all events resolved to present no salient points of attack. Mr Hylton, with whom time was becoming momentarily more precious, came to the subject of his application at once: assuring the Captain that he, Mr Hylton, had taken no steps of any kind since they had met on the last occasion; but that the affair on which he had honoured himself by then speaking to the Captain, had suddenly assumed a more serious aspect than ever.

"This, sir, in short, is a quandary; one you have got into, and must get out of," said the Captain, in a matter-of-fact manner; "and how do you intend doing it? I can't help you. We military people generally, you see, look a hair's-breadth or so beyond our noses, if one may so speak, in the moves we make—considering not only how to advance, but how to retreat; not only, do you see, how to get to a place, but, by Jupiter — forgive me, sir!—what to do when there — and then, how to get back again!"

"I cannot deny, Captain Lutteridge," said Mr Hylton, with a very harassed air, "that I feel myself in a terrible perplexity"—

"Then give me, so please you, your hand," said the Captain, advancing to him cordially, with his right arm extended. "You know what my opinion was, t'other day, when you gave me the honour of a visit, and I thought, by ——! hem! I ask your pardon, sir—but—eh, sir? Has anything new come of it?"

"I have received, within this hour," said Mr Hylton, seriously, while he opened his pocket-book and took out the Secretary of State's letter, "a communication of such weight and consequence, that I shall leave it to speak for itself, Captain Lutteridge."

"All about that abominable vagabond, I suppose, who"—

"Captain Lutteridge," said Mr Hylton, with touching dignity of manner, "you pain me indeed. Why should you, an officer, a man of birth, a gentleman, use language such as this towards a poor wretch at this moment shivering in irons, and expecting hourly to die an unjust death, as I believe it will be, since, as I have told you, I think him innocent?"

"I ask your pardon, reverend sir," said the Captain, courteously; "but do not forget that we think differently about this affair — at least, you and Lord Milverstoke do. As for me," he added, with a look of sudden vexation, "little care I, truly, whether this gentleman live or die!"

"This is the document I spoke of, Captain. Will you read it?" said Mr

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Hylton, with a sigh: and his companion immediately took the letter, reading every line of it as scrupulously as though it had been some death-warrant addressed to, and requiring execution by, himself. "Phew! Phew! sir!" he exclaimed, or rather whistled, when he had finished reading the letter, down even to the signature; "by this time you must be somewhat sick of this business! Well, I do say, not intending disrespect to civilians, least of all to your cloth—but — give *me*, reverend sir, a military trial, and a quick death according to order, without questions asked after the court hath broke up! It saves a world of trouble—all such as this you are giving yourself, and occasioning others too!"

"But—forgive me, Captain—what say you to the substance of this letter? Is my tongue to be tied, and is yours, and this man to die, therefore, possibly unjustly?"

"Why, sir, as to the letter, what is the Secretary of State to my Lord Milverstoke or me? Can he force open our lips? No; nor fifty Lords Farnborough, sir!"

"But I trust you see now how careful I was, with both my Lord Farnborough and the Chief Justice, to say nothing, till authorised, about persons or places, as well as things?"

"That, sir, of course, you would be," interposed the Captain, somewhat sarcastically.

"But let me ask," continued Mr Hylton, "supposing this letter had been addressed to *you*, Captain, and you were in my place—what answer would you give?"

"Why, sir, I would not have put myself in your place, do you see; for I should have deemed myself to be (which doubtless you, reverend sir, by reason of your holy cloth, are not) meddling somewhat."

"But, Captain Lutteridge, I implore an answer—time presses frightfully!"

"Why, you see, sir, I am a soldier, and you a parson, reverend sir: therefore"—the Captain paused; the consequence, of which he had indicated the approach, not appearing, or presenting itself, exactly when he wished it.

"I must, in virtue of the sacred office which I hold, and of which you have reminded me, implore you to let no imaginary notions of honour"—

"Honour!—honour imaginary! I give you my word, reverend sir, that I never heard anything so monstrous fall from man before!" said the Captain, with an amazed air.

"Oh, sir, I neither thought, nor said, aught that you could except to," replied Mr Hylton. "No man values honour more than I; nor do I think any man living can have a truer, keener sense of it than you, Captain Lutteridge: all I dread is, lest while you strain honour too far, a fellow-creature be sacrificed."

"What would you then, reverend sir," inquired the Captain, somewhat appeased, "with me, now, after what has before passed between us? For I do protest that I know not! Say plainly, sir!"

"This being an imminent matter of life and death," said Mr Hylton, after a pause, "do you feel yourself at liberty to authorise me, if I should deem it proper, to communicate to the Secretary of State what you told me before I went up to London?"

"No, sir," replied the Captain, quietly.

"Is that really your final determination, dear Captain?" inquired Mr Hylton, with such a kind of intensity in his manner as quite touched the soldier's heart.

"Upon my word of honour, sir," he replied earnestly, "I really fear it is. You see, sir, I have often talked over this matter with my brother officers; and we all, being bred alike, think alike. Where one's own honour, and another man's life, are in conflict, what the deuce to do we know not. We made not honour: it is made for us; it governs us all, or ought; and it shall govern me, and be obeyed, so help—hem! I beg your pardon, sir, for what I was going to say, but did not, you being a clergyman."

"I am distracted!" said Mr Hylton, pressing his hand to his forehead.

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"So methinks, with much respect," quoth the impenetrable soldier, "you have good reason to be, reverend sir. Look you at the way in which you have fixed everybody: my Lord Milverstoke, my Lord Farnborough, me—but most especially yourself! Surely, good sir, it was not I that did all this!"

"True, true, Captain," replied Mr Hylton, with a melancholy air, and sighing deeply; "and yet, had you not yourself, with all a soldier's honourable frankness, first volunteered to tell me all this"—

"Piff! Paff!—Phew!" exclaimed the Captain, suddenly starting up as if he had just received a pistol-shot. "Why, sir—egad—you are right! What you say is quite true!" Captain Lutteridge stood rubbing his chin, and gazing earnestly, in perturbed silence, at Mr Hylton. "Why, hang me, sir, if it is not I that have put you, and everybody else, into a false position!" He paused, gazing at Mr Hylton with the look of a man astounded by some sudden discovery. "Sir, in his Majesty's service there is not, I do believe, a greater fool at this moment than am I, Captain Lutteridge. The devil hath this day suddenly paid me off, handsomely, a somewhat long score. I beseech you, reverend sir, in this horrible state that I am in, tell me what should I do? I own all this never occurred to me, nor those that I have talked with on the subject! I wonder my brother-officers yonder never thought of it; for as for myself, I am a fool—an arrant fool! Sir—I—I beg your pardon for putting you into all this difficulty."

"My dear Captain," said Mr Hylton, mildly, having waited till the Captain's excitement had a little abated, "I really meant not to suggest anything of this kind: it did not occur to me"—

"Oh yes, it did, sir; but you were too civil to say it. I stand an ass, sir—a very ass before you! And what the deuce to do I know not; yet, on my honour, I never meant to do anything but what was proper and humane."

"Still, Captain, let us not overlook the real difficulty of the case, nor forget what is due to yourself, and also to me, as men of honour, as well as of humanity and religion. It is I that have entailed all this perplexity, by my unauthorised communication of what you had so frankly told me, in your love of justice and fair play. I may have erred in what I did—but what else could I have done? I was forced to leave by that night's coach, or all would have been in vain; and had I not made *some use* of what you had told me, I might as well have stayed here. And when I came back, and poor Ayliffe's body was swinging in the air, you might have reproached me for my false honour and punctilio, and (for aught I could then have known) might have said that, in a matter like this, your delicacy would have given way."

"Sir, there's no gainsaying it. What a puzzle you must have been in. Sometimes, it seems, things will so turn out, that no man can possibly know how to act; and then the only thing is, to do nothing, which can never be wrong."

"Oh, Captain, Captain! cannot it? Look at this case—this very case!"

"I don't know, for the life of me, what to do!" said Captain Lutteridge, walking hastily up and down the room. "Let me, sir, read the letter again. It is a somewhat longwinded roundabout despatch. Methinks I could have said as much in twenty words." He read it over pretty rapidly. "One thing, sir, it shows, that you certainly acted handsomely at headquarters, in not committing one whom you had no right to commit."

"Indeed, Captain, I so deeeply appreciated your disinterested and noble anxiety to assist the cause of justice and humanity, that I was doubly—trebly—on my guard."

"Quite correct, sir, to be so—quite."

"Now, suppose, dear Captain, that you had happened to be in London at the time, and had thoughts of going at once to headquarters to prevent injustice—fatal, irreparable injustice—in this matter, being unwittingly done, don't you think you might have said

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just as much to my Lord Chief Justice as you did to me?—and felt that Lord Milverstoke could have no right to interfere in such a case of life and death as ought to be left to every man's own conscience, alone, to deal with?"

"There's no knowing what a man might do when suddenly pushed, and off his guard. But, for the matter of this letter,"—he turned to it again,—"it seems that you handsomely told the Judge what I said, that I thought the matter in question had no bearing on the case."

"I did most distinctly, most emphatically."

"But, forgive me, reverend sir,—how came you to say, thereupon, that you differed with me?"

"Pardon me, dear Captain; I thought I was right in doing so. It appeared to me that, at a point of time so all-important as that of Lord Alkmond's quitting the Castle for the wood"—

"That, sir, is what I so marvel—have always marvelled—at. What possible bearing—pshaw!—what could duelling have to do with this vagabond and Lord"—

"*Duelling!*" echoed Mr Hylton, with a great start: while Captain Lutteridge sprang clean out of the chair in which he had the moment before sat down, and slapped his hand desperately on his mouth, as though he would have forced back the words which had leaped forth never to return.

"Did I say *duelling?*" commenced the Captain, in a low tone, after a long gasp, and staring amazedly at his companion, who looked equally astounded.

"Yes, you did, Captain Lutteridge!" said Mr Hylton in an absent manner—having fallen into a deep reverie.

The Captain stood still, his eyes fixed on the floor, in silence.

"Bah!" at length he exclaimed, with such a violent stamp of his foot that the floor quivered under it. "I—I—look on this as a stroke of fate, sir!" said he, approaching Mr Hylton with a desperate air, his face quite flushed. "We don't part, reverend sir, till we have agreed on what is to be done with the word that hath thus accursedly jumped out from me," continued the Captain, hastily going to the door, which he locked, and took out of it the key. Then he strode to the fireplace, and gave Mr Hylton, in passing, a furious glance. "Look you, sir, we soldiers are plain people; and if you, being one cunning in speech, came hither to lay a trap for me"—

"Captain Lutteridge," replied Mr Hylton, calmly, "your language shows that you labour under sudden excitement. Do you, now that I remind you of your expressions, really mean, sir, to insinuate that I, a Christian minister, and, I trust, a gentleman also, could, under any conceivable circumstances whatever, stoop to the baseness of inveigling you into a breach of confidence? I forgive you, Captain Lutteridge, and also the gross and, saving your presence, vulgar indignity," continued Mr Hylton, pointing sternly to the door, "which you have just perpetrated upon me."

"Mr Hylton—reverend sir—I—beg your pardon; I—ask forgiveness, having quite forgotten myself, and you too," said Captain Lutteridge, bowing profoundly, while the colour a little deserted his cheek; and hastily stepping to the door, he unlocked and threw it open. Then, returning to Mr Hylton, he resumed—"You are as free as air, sir: free to go whither you please; to say, to do, what you please, sir—anywhere—to anybody. You are a gentleman, sir; and I, an officer, have not, I fear, acted just now as became an officer and a gentleman."

Nothing could exceed the soldier-like simplicity, gravity, and fine spirit, with which all this was said by Captain Lutteridge.

"'Tis all forgiven—forgotten: it is as though it had never happened, my dear Captain," replied Mr Hylton; "and I shall deem myself honoured if you will suffer me to shake you by the hand, for whose character I have already learned to feel great admiration. I never saw one whom I believed to be actuated by nobler motives—of that be assured; and as for this strange word that has escaped you, it is buried *here*"—he placed his

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right hand on his heart—"it is considered by me, already, as utterly unspoken."

"Most excellent and reverend sir, give me your hand!" said Captain Lutteridge, almost with tears in his eyes, grasping the proffered hand of Mr Hylton. "I never came in my life near one that behaved with such handsomeness, by—I beg pardon, sir! But I never did! And I am beginning, I know not how, to take quite a different view of the entire matter. By Jove, sir, your whole conduct on behalf of this poor wretch is disinterested and great, beyond utterance. The trouble you have taken—what you have put up with while doing all that you have done, no one thinks so highly of as your humble, unworthy servant, Captain Lutteridge; and God himself only can reward you, for He put it all in your heart to do! Sir—I—I almost begin to think this man—Heaven forgive me for calling him a vagabond, poor wretch!—must be, as you say, innocent—though his case has, it must be owned, a desperate ugly look, or you would not have been led to do all you have done; but if he *be* innocent"—the Captain paused for a moment—"I have been all this while doing my best to tie the rope round his neck!"

While Captain Lutteridge was saying all this, Mr Hylton appeared to be attentively listening to him in silence; but his mind was closely engaged with the subject which had been suggested to it, by the pregnant word which had fallen from Captain Lutteridge—*Duelling!*—Duelling? Had *that*, then, been the topic which Lord Alkmond could not bear to hear talked of, and by which he had been so much agitated, as Captain Lutteridge had represented? Why go out into the wood—and directly from the banqueting-table? The more Mr Hylton thought of it—and his ideas sprung up and followed one another with lightning rapidity—the greater were his amazement and anxiety; for he recollected Lord Milverstoke's agitation on the subject being mentioned; his lordship's acknowledgment that it occasioned him great agony, from reasons of which, as he had said, Mr Hylton could have no notion; and his lordship's solemn declaration that it had no connection with, or bearing upon, the awful bereavement which he had suffered. And, again, what reason could there be for his stern refusal to allow the matter to be communicated to the official authorities, even in so grave a case as that affecting the life of a fellow-creature? And he had said, moreover, that it might, it talked about, afford matter for injurious and harassing gossip and speculation! He was thus getting deeper and deeper into gloomy speculation, when Captain Lutteridge's last words, alluding to the rope round Ayliffe's neck, startled Mr Hylton out of his reverie.

"True—certainly, Captain Lutteridge," said he, as if still somewhat confounded by the course of his own bewildering reflections; "but that single word which you have so naturally let fall, at a moment when you were off your guard, has plunged me headlong into a sea of conjecture and perplexity. I own myself utterly at a loss how to connect this conversation with the death of poor Lord Alkmond; and consider you warranted (for all that at present occurs to me) in your frequent assertion that there really was no such connection."

"That may all be, sir, and perhaps is really so; but now the point is, what must be done herein? Anything—nothing?"

"Were I disposed to make any use, and you to permit me, of the information which I now possess"—

"Get Lord Milverstoke's leave, and the thing is done! If his lordship care not, I am sure I don't."

"But what if his lordship should hear that which has happened here today, Captain Lutteridge?"

"What if he do? It will make him angry, very angry, with me; but that I cannot help. He may curse my folly, but cannot question my honour: and what say you, by Jove, sir, to my going myself to my Lord

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Milverstoke, and plainly telling him what has happened? If it will serve your purpose in this strait that you are in, why, I will go at once, and within an hour's time his lordship shall know all that has happened, and do as he pleases."

"Resolution such as yours cannot be daunted, I see, my dear Captain; and I entreat you, then, to do as you propose; and in justice to me, explain how it fell out, without effort of mine, and that I will, of course, neither say a word, nor take a step, till I have his lordship's consent to do so."

"I will do all this, and the sooner the better: and why may I not tell him of Lord Farnborough's letter? I'm sure there's nothing can come of it, though. Men don't fight duels with bludgeons, and at night-time, eh? And strike from behind, too? You don't suppose anything so wild as all that? Had my Lord Alkmond been stabbed or shot, the case might have looked somewhat different. But duelling was doubtless the thing talked of that night, and a bloody duel was spoken of, too, that had no long time before taken place. All this, however, let us see what my Lord Milverstoke will say to. He, for aught I know, may let you go up to London with your news, and make what you can of it. 'Tis a hopeful case, truly; but here is my horse, and within an hour shall I learn what his lordship hath to say concerning this my folly."

The Captain and Mr Hylton then mounted their horses; the former galloping off towards Milverstoke Castle, the latter to the town where Mr Melcombe resided, with whom he was more anxious than ever to confer on the subject of the Secretary of State's letter.

CHAPTER XIII.

As Mr Hylton rode along, he felt a miserable suspicion strengthening in his mind, that the mystery on which he had been placing so fond but gratuitous a reliance was vanishing into thin air, as far as concerned any probable connection between it and the tragical end of Lord Alkmond. The last words of bluff Captain Lutteridge—the bludgeon, the pistol, the rapier, the dagger—quite haunted Mr Hylton, forcing upon him an inference destructive of his hopes on behalf of Ayliffe. He, of course, made no mention to Mr Melcombe of the accidental disclosure of Captain Lutteridge; but both of them were greatly perplexed as to the course proper to be taken with reference to the Secretary of State's letter, which nevertheless loudly demanded that *something* should be done, and that something quickly.

Little thought Captain Lutteridge, as, inwardly cursing his own stupidity at every step he took, he hastened on to the Castle, of the scene which his announced arrival would terminate. 'Twas one between young Lady Emily and her father, with whom she was angel-like pleading the desperate cause of Ayliffe! Any one who been present, hearing the conversation which had taken place that morning in the sick chamber of Lady Alkmond, between her Ladyship and Lady Emily, on the subject of Ayliffe, might have believed himself listening to the converse of two angels: so gentle, so pitiful, so pious was it, as no words can tell. Lady Alkmond lay in bed, in extreme weakness, in a state most precarious; so frightful had been the shock sustained by a delicate system, at a period when that delicacy was in-

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finitely enhanced by the distant prospect—now, alas! at an end—of another addition to the ancient house of her murdered Lord. The Earl, on entering her chamber at his usual hour, on the morning of the day on which Mr Hylton and the Captain's last interview had taken place, on sitting down beside the bed, leaned down and kissed the lily-hued cheek, and pressed the slight attenuated fingers of the gentle sufferer with an air of inconceivable tenderness. Had his attention not been entirely absorbed by her whom he had come to visit, he might have observed Lady Emily, who sat on the opposite side of the bed, looking pale and apprehensive; for she knew that Lady Alkmond intended to utter one word—only one word—into the Earl's ear on his retiring, which word Lady Emily had undertaken afterwards, on that same morning, to enforce upon her father, with all her powers of dutiful and loving persuasion and intercession. She trembled like an aspen leaf, therefore, when the Earl, after sitting rather longer than usual, rose to take his departure; and Lady Alkmond, gazing at him sweetly, as he kissed her forehead and clasped her hand, softly whispered, "Forgive!" Lady Emily observed her father slightly start, but only very slightly. He looked for a moment earnestly at Lady Alkmond, and, after pressing his lips to her pale cheek, withdrew in silence. When he had quitted the chamber, Lady Emily glided round to the side of her sister, and both of them remained for some moments silent, and with beating hearts.

"Don't fear, love!" whispered Lady Alkmond.

"I tremble, Agnes; I feel I do, but 'tis not from fear. I will do what I have promised!"

Lady Emily's fingers gently clasped those of her sister-in-law, whose beautiful cheek was of an ashy whiteness, and her bosom heaved; for Lady Alkmond knew the firmness of the resolution which Lady Emily had formed, to follow her stern father to his library, soon after he had quitted the chamber where they were sitting, and brave the peril of angering him, upon a subject on which he had never hitherto interchanged a syllable with her. And she well knew his fierce inflexibility of character, and that, on the trying topic which she was going to urge, that inflexibility would be exhibited with tenfold force. But she had received several letters from Mrs Hylton, so feelingly advocating the cause of Ayliffe, his dying wife, and unfortunate little son, and so strenuously protesting the writer's and her husband's conviction of Ayliffe's innocence, that Lady Emily resolved, cost what effort it might, to make an attempt to wring from her father that expression of a desire for mercy to be extended to the prisoner, which Mrs Hylton assured her would probably be attended with success, and save an innocent man from the horrible and ignominious death of a murderer. That morning she had been early in his library, and placed on the table at which he usually sat, a little copy of the New Testament, with a slip of paper in it, on which she had written in pencil the words, "Matthew, xviii. 35." On his return from Lady Alkmond's room, Lord Milverstoke repaired to his library, in which he walked to and fro for some time, meditating with no light displacency on the word which had fallen from Lady Alkmond. He suspected its true import and object; and on taking his seat, and opening with some surprise the Testament which lay before him, guided by the reference written by the trembling fingers of his daughter, he read as follows—"*So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye, from your hearts, forgive not, every one his brother, their trespasses.*" This verse the Earl read hastily; then laid down the book, folded his arms, and leaned back in his seat, not with subdued feelings, but very highly indignant. He now saw clearly what had been intended by the faint but impressive whisper of Lady Alkmond, even could he have before entertained a doubt upon the subject. Oh! why did not thoughts of the heavenly temper of these two loving and trembling spirits melt his

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stern heart? 'Twas not so, however; and even *anger* swelled within that FATHER's breast of untamed fierceness—anger, almost struggling and shaping itself into the utterance of "Interference! intrusion! presumption!" After a long interval, in which his thoughts were thus angrily occupied, he reopened the Testament, and again read the sublime and awful declaration of the Redeemer of mankind; yet smote it not his heart. And after a while, removing the paper, he calmly replaced the sacred volume on the spot from which it had been taken by Lady Emily. Not long after he had done so, he heard a faint tapping at the distant door, but without taking any notice of it, although he had a somewhat disturbing suspicion as to the cause of that meek application, and the person by whom it was made. The sound was presently repeated somewhat louder; on which "Who is there?—enter!" called out the Earl loudly, and in his usual stern tone, looking apprehensively towards the door—which was opened, as he had thought, and perhaps feared, it might be, by Lady Emily.

"It is I, dear papa," said she, closing the door after her, and advancing rather rapidly towards him, who moved not from his seat; though the appearance of—now—his only child, and that a daughter most beautiful in budding womanhood, and approaching a FATHER with timid, downcast looks, might well have elicited some word or gesture of welcoming affection and tenderness.

"What brings you hither, Emily?" he inquired coldly, as his daughter, in her loveliness and terror, stood within a few feet of him, her fine features wearing an expression of blended modesty and resolution.

"Do you not know, my dearest papa?" said she gently; "do you not suspect? Do not be angry!—do not, dear papa, look so sternly at me! I come to speak with you, who are my father, in all love and duty."

"I am not stern—I am not angry, Emily. Have I not ever been kind to you? Why, then, this unusual mode of approaching and addressing me? Were I a mere tyrant, you could not show better than your present manner does that I am such!"

His words were kind, but his eye and his manner blighting. His daughter's knees trembled under her. She glanced hastily at the table in quest of the little book which her hands had that morning placed there; and, not seeing it, her heart sunk.

"Be seated, Emily," said Lord Milverstoke, moving towards her a chair, and gently placing her in it, immediately opposite to him, at only a very little distance. She thought that she had never till that moment seen her father's face; or, at least, had never before noticed its true character. How cold and severe was the look of the penetrating eyes now fixed on her; how rigid were the features; how commanding was the expression which they wore; how visibly clouded with sorrow, and marked with the traces of suffering!

"And what, Emily, would you say?" he inquired calmly.

"Dearest papa, I would say, if I dared, what my sister said to you so short a time ago—*Forgive!*"

"Whom?" inquired the Earl, striving to repress all appearance of emotion.

"Him who is to die on Monday next—Adam Ayliffe. Oh my dearest papa, do not—oh, do not look so fearfully at me!"

"You mean, Emily, *the murderer of your brother!*" He paused for a moment. "Am I right? Do I understand you?" inquired her father, gloomily.

"But I think that he is not—I do believe that he is not."

"How can it concern *you*, Emily, to think or believe on the subject? Good child, meddle not with what you understand not. Who has put you upon this, Emily?"

"My own heart, dear papa!"

"Bah, girl!" cried the Earl, unable to restrain his angry impulse, "do not patter nonsense with your father on a subject like this. You have been trained and tutored to torment me on this matter!"

"Papa!—my papa!—I trained! I tutored! By whom? Am I of your

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blood?" said his daughter, proudly and indignantly.

"You had better return, my child, to your occupations"—

"My occupation, dearest papa, is here, and, so long as you may suffer me to be with you, to say few, but few words to you. It is hard if I cannot, I who never knowingly grieved you in my life. Remember that I am now your only child. Yet I fear you love me not as you ought to love an only child, or you could not speak to me as you have just spoken!" She paused for a moment, and added, as if with a sudden desperate impulse—"My poor sister and I do implore you to give this wretch a chance of life, for we both believe that he is innocent!"

For a second or two the Earl seemed really astounded; and well he might, for his youthful daughter had suddenly spoken to him with a precision and distinctness of language, an energy of manner, and an expression of eye, such as the Earl had not dreamed of her being able to exhibit, and told of the strength of purpose with which she had come to him.

"And you both believe that he is innocent!" said he, echoing her words, too much amazed to utter another word.

"Yes, we do! we do! in our hearts. My sister and I have prayed to God many times for his mercy; and she desires me to tell you that she has forgiven this man Ayliffe, even though he did this dreadful deed; and so have I. Wife and sister of the dear one dead, we both forgive, even though the poor wretch be guilty; but we believe him innocent, and if he be, oh, Heaven forbid that on Monday he should die!"

"Emily," said the Earl, who had waited with forced composure till his daughter had ceased, "do you not think that your proper place is in your own apartment, or with your suffering sister-in-law?"

"Why should you thus treat me as a child, papa?" inquired Lady Emily, scarcely able to restrain her tears.

"Why should I not?" asked her father calmly.

Lady Emily looked on the ground for some moments in silence.

"Does it not occur to you as possible that you are meddling? meddling with matters beyond your province? Is it fitting, *girl*," he continued, unable to resist an instantaneous but most bitter emphasis on the word, "that you should be HERE talking to me at all—for one moment even, on a matter which I have never thought of naming to you—a child?"

"I am a child, papa; but I am *your* child, and your only one; and love you more than all the whole world," replied his daughter with ineffable sweetness.

"Obey me, then, as a proof of that love: retire to your chamber, and there wonder at what you have ventured—presumed, this morning to do."

Lady Emily felt the glance of his eye upon her, as though it had lightened; but she quailed not.

"My dear, my only parent, I implore you send me not away; let me"—

"Emily, I cannot be disobeyed; I am not in the habit of being disobeyed by any one; it is very sad that I should see the attempt first made by my child."

"Oh, papa! forgive me! forgive me!" She arose, and approaching him hastily, as she observed him about to advance, sunk on one knee before him, clasping her hands together. "Oh, hear me for but a moment. I never knelt before but to God, yet kneel I now to my father. Oh, have mercy! nay, be JUST!"

"Why, Emily, verily I fear that long confinement, and want of exercise and of changed scenes, are preying upon your mind; you are not speaking rationally. Rise, child, and do not pursue this folly—or I may think you mad!" He disengaged her hands gently from his knee, which they had the moment before clasped, and raised her from her kneeling posture, she weeping bitterly.

"I am not mad, papa, nor is my sister; but we fear lest God's anger should fall upon you, nay, upon us all, if you will not listen to the voice of compassion."

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"Be seated, Emily," said the Earl. "Excited as you are at present," he continued, with rapidly increasing sternness of manner, "no words of mine will be able to satisfy you of the grievous impropriety, nay, the cruel absurdity of all this proceeding. You talk to me like a parrot about mercy, and compassion, and God's anger, and so forth, as though you understood what you were saying, and I understood not what I am doing, what I ought to do, and what I have done. Child, you forget yourself, me, and your duty to me. How dared you to profane yonder Testament, and insult your father, by placing it before him, as you did this morning? Did you do so?"

"I did," she answered, sobbing.

"You presumptuous girl!—forgetful of the fifth commandment!"

"Oh! say not so—say not so! I love, I reverence you—and I FEAR you now," said Lady Emily, with passionate energy, gazing at him, with tears running down her cheeks, her dark hair partially deranged, her hands clasped together in a supplicatory manner. "I prayed to God, before I came to you, that I might not be doing wrong—that you might not be angry with me—that, if angry, you might forgive me."

"Angry with you! Have I not cause? Never dared daughter do such thing to father before! You presume to rebuke and threaten me—*me*—with the vengeance of Heaven, if I yield not to your sickly, dreaming, drivelling sentimentality. Silence!" he exclaimed, perceiving her about to speak. "I have not had my eyes closed, I tell you now, for days past. I have observed your changed manner. You have been deliberating, long beforehand, how to perpetrate this undutifulness. As though my heart had not been already struck, as with a thunderbolt, from Heaven, you, forsooth—you idle, unthinking child!—must strive to stab it—to wound me, to insult me! This is not your own doing—you dared not have thought of it. You are the silly tool of others. Silence! hear me, undutiful girl."

"Papa, I cannot listen to you saying all this, in which you are so wrong.—I am no tool of anybody! Twice have you said this thing!" Her figure the Earl perceived involuntarily becoming erect as she spoke, and her eye fixed with steadfast brightness upon his. Had he been sufficiently calm and observant, he might have seen in his daughter, at that moment, a faint reflection of his own lofty spirit—intolerant of injustice. "And even you, papa, have no right whatever thus to talk to me. If I have done wrong, chide me becomingly; but all that you have said to me only hurts me, and stings me, and I cannot submit to it."

"Lady Emily, to your chamber!" said the Earl, with a stately air, rising. So did his daughter.

"My Lord!" she exclaimed magnificently, her tall figure drawn up to its full height, and her lustrous eyes fixed unwavering upon his own. Neither spoke for a moment; and the Earl began, he knew not why, to feel great inward agitation, as he gazed at the erect figure of his silent and indignant daughter.

"My child!" said he at length faintly, with a quivering lip, and, extending his arms, he moved a step towards her; on which she sprung forward into his arms, throwing her own about his neck, and kissing his cheek passionately. His strong will for once had failed him; his full eyes overflowed, and a tear fell on his daughter's forehead. She wept bitterly. For a while he spoke not, but gently led her to a couch, and sat down beside her.

"Oh, papa, papa!" she murmured, "how I love you!"

For a while he was silent, struggling, and with partial success, to overcome the violence of his emotions. Then he spoke in a low, deep tone, and with a strange expression of countenance.

"The voices of the dead are sounding in my ears, Emily! the tranquil dead! 'Tis said, my Emily,"—he paused for some moments, and his agitation was prodigious,—"that I was stern to your sweet mother"—

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"Oh, dear, dearest, best beloved by daughters — never!" she cried vehemently, struggling to escape from his grasp—for he held her rigidly, while gazing at her with agonised eyes—that she might again throw her arms around his neck.

"And I now fearfully feel—I fear, that I was stern, as I have this day been stern to you. Forgive me, ye meek and blessed dead!"—his quivering lips were closed for a moment, as were also his eyes. "Alas, Emily! she is looking at me through your eyes. Oh, how like!" he remarked, as if speaking to himself. His daughter covered her eyes, and buried her head in his bosom. "Do you, my Emily, forgive me?"

"Oh, papa! no, no; what have I to forgive? Everything have I to love, my own sweet papa! Much I fear that I may have done what a daughter ought not to have done! I have grieved and wounded a father that tenderly loved me"—

"Ay, my child, I do," he whispered tremulously, gently drawing her slender form nearer to his heart. "Emily," said he, after a while, "go, get me that Testament which you placed before me; oh go, dear child!" She still hung her head, and made no motion of going. "Go, get it me; bring it to me!"

She rose without a word, and brought it to him; and while he silently read the verse to which she had directed his attention, she sat beside him, trembling and in silence, her eyes timidly fixed on the ground.

"It was in love, and not presumption, my Emily, that you laid these awful words before me."

"Indeed, my papa, it was," said she, bursting into tears.

He appeared about to speak to her, when words evidently failed him suddenly. At length—"And when that sweet soul"—he paused—"this morning whispered in my ear, did she know of this that you had done?" Lady Emily could not speak. She bowed her head in acquiescence, and sobbed. Her father was fearfully agitated. "Wretch that I am!—I am not worthy of either of you!" Lady Emily again flung her arms round him fondly, and kissed him. "I am yielding to great weakness, my love," said he, after a while, with somewhat more of composure. "Yet, never shall I—never can I—forget this morning! I have long felt and feared that I was not made to be loved: I have seen it written in people's faces. Yet can I love!"

"I know you can!—I know you do, my own dear papa! Do you not believe that I love you? that Agnes loves you?"

"I do, my Emily—I do! Yet till this moment have I felt alone in life. In this vast pile, to me now how gloomy and desolate! with these woods, now so horrible around me, I have been alone—utterly alone! And yet were you with me—you, my only daughter—who, I suppose, dared not tell me how much you loved me!"

"Oh, do not say so, papa! I knew your grief and suffering. They were too sacred to be touched. I wept for you, but in my own chamber!"

"You stand beside me as an angel, Emily," said the Earl fondly, "as you have ever been; yet I now feel as though my eyes had not really seen and known you!"

They walked slowly to and fro, the Earl affectionately supporting her tall slim figure; and as he gazed at her, though her eyes were heavy with weeping, and her features partly concealed beneath her dark dishevelled tresses, he beheld in them a beauty which he had never fully seen before, and which no one knew him familiarly enough ever to have remarked to him.

"Papa," said she at length, evidently with timorous reluctance in her manner, "shall I offend you if"—she paused, and glanced at him apprehensively.

"No, Emily, sweet love! you will not—you cannot now offend me," said he, sighing deeply, and speaking very gravely, but affectionately. "I know what is in your gentle heart—your earliest words this morning are still ringing in my ears. Can you believe and trust in me now, my dear Emily?"

"Indeed, indeed, papa, I can!"

"As you love me, then, sweet girl!

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do not at present speak to me on this dreadful affair. I know all that you would say: but you do not, you cannot, you ought not, to know as much of this matter as I do. Remembering the solemn and fearful passage of Holy Writ which you have showed me, Emily, I yet declare to you I believe in my conscience that there is no shadow of doubt about the guilt of Ayliffe. So said his judge, an able and merciful judge; so said the jury; so say the whole world! I could tell you of expressions of dreadful malice, on his part, against me and my family. But why—why, my love, should I distress you, or harass myself?"

Lady Emily was going to speak, but he added—

"Suppose before he suffer the sentence of the law, he were to acknowledge that he did this awful deed—what then, Emily?"

"What mean you, dear papa?" she inquired faintly.

"Should his life be even *then* spared?—or should he die?" said the Earl in a very solemn manner.

"Oh, papa!" she murmured, after a pause, sighing heavily. "But," she added, "suppose he should not confess it, but die, saying that he is innocent, and it should be so found afterwards, would not that be awful, dearest papa?"

"My dear Emily, unfortunately few criminals suffer their just sentence without falsely protesting innocence. Were we to believe them, against all proof positive of guilt, how could law or justice be administered?"

"But—forgive a word more, papa—suppose he should *really* die innocent?"

"My dear child, that is, I own, a shocking supposition; but—you may speak of this again to me, I hear the sound of steps coming along the corridor."

The Earl was right; in a few moments a servant gently opened the door, and announced that Captain Lutteridge had just arrived from the barracks in great haste, and begged to be allowed immediately to see his lordship on an important matter. The Earl started, and, after a few seconds' angry pause, said, "Let him be shown hither."

When the servant had withdrawn—"Emily," said he, "this is a well-meaning, thick-headed soldier, who has occasioned me great distress by his folly and meddling; but after the message which he has sent, I am bound to see him. Away, my love—I hear him coming—God bless thee! God bless thee!" he continued, kissing her fondly. "Go through yonder door;" and Lady Emily ran to the private door, and in a moment more Captain Lutteridge entered, and found the Earl alone.

"I fear your lordship is ill," said the Captain, approaching him, and bowing courteously.

"No, sir; but I am harassed," replied the Earl, who had resumed all his habitual haughtiness of manner: "and may I request the favour of being at once informed what may be your urgent business with me?"

The Captain was, as usual, excessively irritated by the Earl's mode of address, but was then conscious of being in no position to quarrel with, or resent it.

"I will to the point at once, my Lord," said he, with forced composure. "I am come to own myself to have been just playing the part of an utter fool."

There was something in his quaint embarrassed manner which instantly arrested the Earl's attention, and he listened with stern curiosity.

"Your lordship may believe that as a gentleman, and having the honour of bearing his Majesty's commission, I would rather suffer death than willingly or knowingly break my word"—

"For Heaven's sake, sir, proceed; go on:" said the Earl impatiently, observing Captain Lutteridge hesitate for a moment.

"Well, my Lord, yet so the matter is;—in a conversation had, scarce an hour ago, with Mr Hylton, about this caitiff that is to die on Monday—I could submit to be shot for having to acknowledge to your lordship, that unadvisedly, and in the heat of the very speech in which I was protesting to the con-

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trary, out slipped the accursed word—*duelling*."

"What, sir!" exclaimed the Earl, starting out of his chair, and standing erect, gazing at Captain Lutteridge in a kind of stupified silence.

"Yes, my Lord, I am a man of few words, and those few, how foolish sometimes! My Lord—I say — out sprung this thrice accursed word—duelling"—

"Merciful heavens!—these people will assuredly kill me, between them all," exclaimed the Earl, striking his forehead with his clenched hand. "And what then, sir?" he presently inquired, desperately, but with the manner of one quite exhausted.

"Nothing, my Lord," replied the Captain.

"How say you, sir? Are you trifling—bandying words with me? What mean you, sir, by—*nothing?*"

"My Lord, what I mean I say; what I say, that I mean," replied Captain Lutteridge, doggedly.

The Earl glanced at him for a moment, with an expression which prevented a somewhat fierce speech that the Captain was about making; and then—

"Have you any other business with me, sir?" inquired the Earl, with evidently suppressed fury.

"None, my Lord—none, I thank my stars," replied the Captain, coolly, and even sarcastically.

"Sir, I seem the sport of destiny this day!—Never felt I so humiliated! I wish you good day, sir," said the Earl.

"You see, my Lord," said the Captain resolutely—"I am cool, your lordship is not; wherefore I overlook"—

The Earl rang his bell violently; and stood in silence, till a servant appeared; on which his lordship motioned the Captain to the door, with an air which was to that gallant person quite intolerable.

"This is your house, my Lord," said he, haughtily, "and I have no right in it; nay, I had no business here whatever, seeing I ought to have better understood the nature of the person living in it. For the present, my Lord, good day. But I pray you, by no means to forget the words which you have this day used to me, nor the manner in which, before your menial, you have presumed to dismiss a gentleman and an officer. Be assured that if your lordship be disposed to obliviousness hereof, I am not."

With this the Captain made a low and formal bow, and with slow dignified steps withdrew.

If he imagined that his last words had had the least effect on Lord Milverstoke, he was mistaken: for his lordship was sunk deep in a reverie with which the name and threats of Captain Lutteridge had no connection whatever. And indeed, as for the Captain himself, something occurred a few moments after his exit from the Earl's library, which made him for awhile forget the only as yet unavenged insult which he was aware of having ever experienced in his life; for he happened to encounter the Lady Emily, who, unexpectedly to herself, crossed his path on her way to Lady Alkmond's apartment, and disappeared in a moment.

"By my sword!" said the Captain to himself, as he hurried on, "what a beauty is that girl already! And in two years' time—heigho—naught will be heard at Court but of her. But, if she hath a temper like her father's—why, Heaven pity him that is captivated by her!"

When the Captain was fairly on his way back to the barracks, his first stinging recollection of the treatment which he had experienced from the Earl made him scratch his ear violently, and then dig his spurs into his startled but obedient horse, who thereupon pelted onward with him, till suddenly reined up, on its rider's meeting another horseman, and that was Mr Hylton, on his way home from Mr Melcombe's.

"Sir, good day," quoth the Captain. "Are you going to the Castle? Ecod, if you be, look out! You will be clean eaten up in one minute! Look out, therefore, is all I shall say, that am just escaped to tell you."

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"Why, Captain, what is the matter, eh?"

"Matter? Egad, go and see, if you be so minded: for I'll be —— hem! I ask your pardon, sir, you being a parson—good day, sir."

"But stay—stay, Captain! Am I to go to the Castle to see Lord Milverstoke?"

"Oh, certainly!" said the Captain, smiling grimly. "Go and put your head into the lion's mouth for a moment! You *may* come out again! And if you do, blessed be the stars that will shine on Mr Hylton—good day, good day, sir!"—and away rode the Captain, leaving Mr Hylton in a perplexed, whom he had found in a very melancholy, mood: for Mr Hylton had quitted Mr Melcombe without having scarcely a ray of hope left on behalf of the unhappy convict, for whom he had so powerfully but (as he now feared) unavailingly exerted himself. While he and Mr Melcombe had been in the midst of their anxious consultation on the course to be pursued, Mr Hylton's attention was called by his companion to a person just then passing along the street, into which the window of Mr Melcombe's office looked, and who was no other than old Ayliffe, in his broad hat, long threadbare blue coat and high walking-stick, on his way from the gaol. Oh, what a face was his! wasted, and full of sorrow and resignation! And his step seemed feebler than Mr Hylton had before observed it to be. He heaved a deep sigh while gazing after the venerable figure of one whom he did not venture to summon into the apartment in which his son's welfare was the sole subject of discourse and consultation. Mr Hylton told Mr Melcombe, with a depressed air, that he had accidentally discovered what had been the topic of conversation at the Earl of Milverstoke's table, at the moment of Lord Alkmond's quitting it; but that it had become known to him in a manner which at present prevented his making any use of what he had heard; yet that he was able to assure Mr Melcombe, that the conversation seemed to throw no light whatever on the gloomy affair, and, indeed, appeared quite incapable of being in any intelligible or probable way brought to bear upon it. Mr Melcombe looked blank enough on hearing this.

"Then I fear *the game is up*, Mr Hylton—if you will forgive the expression," said Mr Melcombe, shrugging his shoulders, and sighing. Mr Hylton only shook his head. "Can't you give me—I mean, are not you at liberty to give one the least inkling,—just a hint—a mere breath—eh? I would receive it in sacred confidence."

"On no earthly consideration," replied Mr Hylton, sadly. "My lips are sealed till I see one from whom I accidentally learnt what I know. But this I can tell you—certain I am that there is something or other strange and mysterious about Lord Alkmond's fate, unconnected though what I have heard may be with the facts proved against the prisoner."

"Does the intelligence which you have thus become possessed of in any way vary your view of the facts proved at the trial?" inquired Mr Melcombe. After a pause, during which Mr Hylton rapidly ran over them, he answered in the negative.

"Does it bear at all on the new facts laid before the Secretary of State, as mentioned in my agent's letter?" Again Mr Hylton paused, and longer than before.

"I cannot say that it does; nor yet will I say that it does not."

"The way to try the question fairly is, to put yourself in my Lord Farnborough's place, and ask yourself whether that which you now know warrants you in further suspending the execution of this sentence."

"Of course, acting only on the knowledge which he would then have of the case, I mean, independently of my own unshaken conviction of the prisoner's innocence?"

"Of course; most certainly. You see, Mr Hylton, my Lord Farnborough has a tremendous responsibility upon him, and must rest the exercise of his discretion on sure grounds. What conclusion, then, on these principles,

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ought Lord Farnborough to arrive at, as the case now stands, and supposing him informed of that which you say that you now are?"

"Oh, do not ask me!" replied Mr Hylton, gloomily.

"Is it information likely to bring you at all into communication with the Earl of Milverstoke? What effect will it have on him if he know it? Have we any chance of getting from his lordship an expression of doubt of the prisoner's guilt, or a recommendation to mercy?" Again Mr Hylton paused, turning over in his mind the possible result of Captain Lutteridge's interview that day with Lord Milverstoke; and having done so, shook his head and sighed.

"Well, mystery! mystery all! all is mystery!" exclaimed Mr Melcombe, shrugging his shoulders: "my duties seem a farce at present. We are walking in a fog, a blinding fog;" but, thought he, I see through that fog the dim, ghastly outline of a gallows! "My real opinion," he continued, "is that you have done all that can be done; and this unhappy fellow must be left to his fate. But, by the way, Mr Hylton, you must needs answer the Under Secretary's letter, and without delay. I never read one at once so courteous, so solemn, so exacting of an answer. As a gentleman, but above all, as a Christian minister, you are bound to be promptly candid in this matter, and relieve his lordship from the harassing doubts which it is you only who have raised in his mind."

"'Tis true, Mr Melcombe; I feel the pressure of your words," said Mr Hylton, "and if possible I will send an answer by this night's coach; but I must first see or hear from Lord Milverstoke; and so have not"—looking at his watch—"a moment's time to lose. Pray come over to the parsonage to-morrow morning." And with this Mr Hylton took his leave of Mr Melcombe, grievously depressed, and, indeed, reduced well-nigh to downright despair. He feared within himself to contemplate the scattered fragments of the structure of hope which he had raised with such well-meant precipitation. He felt, indeed, sick at heart. Not all the endearments of good Mrs Hylton could cheer his drooping spirits for a moment. He began now to afflict himself on account of having only protracted the mortal anguish of Ayliffe, and—in language terrible to be recollected—made him suffer twice the pangs of death. Little thought he of the angel who, in the form of Lady Emily, had that day joined her passionate advocacy with his! That her gentle hand had struck a blow which reached a long ice-bound heart, whence gushed upon her streams of pent-up love and tenderness, as from a source never, perchance, to be dried up again: but had that dear noble creature succeeded in overruling her father's JUDGMENT? In his sudden condescension towards one whom he rightly regarded as, in such a matter, but a child, had he not shown a glimpse of reasoning, adverse to her wishes, which was not to be answered? Of all this Mr Hylton knew nothing; and, in forming the resolution to go that evening to the Castle, ascertain the state of his lordship's feelings on the subject, and make one last earnest effort to shake his confidence in the prisoner's guilt, and persuade him to join in a recommendation to mercy, Mr Hylton felt himself at once discharging a duty and exercising a right.

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CHAPTER XIV.

SHORTLY after arriving at the parsonage, Mr Hylton partook of a slight and hasty dinner; and then, taking with him the letter of Mr Melcombe's London agent, and that of the Under Secretary of State to himself, set off for the Castle, with heavy forebodings, when he adverted to the ominous intimations with which Captain Lutteridge had that day left him. Mr Hylton's courage was not at fault; and in a cause which he believed to be righteous and just, he would have faced the bloodiest tyrant whom ever earth had seen and shuddered at. He would not else have been a true servant of his Master, whose awful words should be ever sounding in our ears, subduing vain fears, and strengthening feeble purposes (and so they ever were with Mr Hylton):—*I say unto you, my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear Him who, after he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell;* YEA, I SAY UNTO YOU, FEAR HIM. "So," said Mr Hylton, within himself, as he went to pay probably his last visit, in Ayliffe's lifetime, to the Lord of Milverstoke, "let me ask myself—do I verily in my conscience believe (as said the Judge to the jury in this poor man's case) that Adam Ayliffe is, in spite of all appearances against him, innocent of the crime for which he is adjudged to die?" And after a brief and serious revolving of the matter, he answered, "Yes, I do: then will I make this last effort, and, if it fail, console myself by reflecting that what I thought my duty I have done, careless of consequences."

Having come to this conclusion, he felt a wonderful composure of feeling, and serenity of spirit, which deserted him not for a moment, even when he entered the room in which Lord Milverstoke awaited him, and which had been the scene of their former agitating interview. He expected to see the Earl with a fierce and scowling countenance, and to hear him speak in a voice of bitter contemptuousness, if indeed he were not even roused into fury ungovernable. But Lord Milverstoke received him with marvellous calmness of manner, albeit with visible gloom.

"Pray, Mr Hylton, be seated," said his lordship, with a sort of solemn courtesy which sensibly affected his visitor. "I am far from well, in either mind or body, but doubtless you have that to say which I ought to hear, and at once, therefore, sir, speak freely. I am all attention."

"Your lordship has to-day seen Captain Lutteridge," said Mr Hylton, resolved to take advantage of this unexpectedly calm humour of the Earl, and touch first the most dangerous topic which he had to deal with.

"I have, sir. He told me what had passed between you and him this day. Captain Lutteridge is a plain-spoken gentleman, and somewhat abruptly broke to me a matter very painful; and I fear I dismissed him roughly, for which I am sorry, and ask his pardon; and I request you, if you should see him, to tell him this from me."

"I trust your lordship is satisfied that I had taken no means whatever to betray the Captain into the inadvertence which he must have explained to your lordship."

"He did not say that you did, Mr Hylton, nor suggest it; and I believe that you could not possibly do so base

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and paltry a thing. And now that you know what formed the subject of conversation at my table, on that—that—hideous night—let me ask you, sir, whether you agree with what I told you some time ago, that what was said on that occasion could have no bearing on the case which you have thought proper so vehemently, so tenaciously, to advocate and uphold?"

"My Lord, I feel it my duty to acknowledge that I have been unable, since hearing what was the subject of conversation on that dismal night, to see any means of connecting that conversation with the event which we all so deeply deplore; which still seems to me enshrouded in mystery and terror. But I am unshaken in my belief of the innocence of Ayliffe"—

"I feel it, sir, very difficult to listen to you with calmness; but I restrain my feelings, and I request to be informed of your object in coming hither to-night."

"My Lord, I deem it right to show your lordship how at present stands the case, which now probably can have only one ending, and that on Monday morning next." Here he took out of his pocket-book two letters, and handing them to his lordship, said, "The first, my Lord, of these letters, is one which gives an account of what took place before the Secretary of State, with reference to the communication forwarded from Dunkirk; and the second is the Under Secretary's letter to me, on the subject concerning which I have just spoken to your lordship."

The Earl took the two proffered documents, and opened first the latter with visibly checked eagerness, reading it over in silence. "I will not," said his lordship, when he had come to the end, "ask you, sir, whether *now* you feel justified in having made the representations which have called forth this very marvellous and creditable despatch; for such, I suppose, I must call it. But if you have no objection to be so communicative, sir, I wish to know what course you may now be intending to pursue. I mean, speaking with precision, how you will endeavour to make it appear that you have not grievously disturbed the administration of justice."

"Oh, my Lord, while I acknowledge the courtesy of your lordship's language, I feel the searing severity of your rebuke, and must submit to it. But while I do so, suffer me to say that my conscience acquits me of having done, intentionally, wrong. I acted in a great, a terrible difficulty.

"I think, sir, you evade—no, sir, I beg your pardon—I mean, I think that you did not hear, or have forgotten, my question. I ask you again, what course you intend to pursue with reference to this letter? You pause, Mr Hylton. If it be any relief to your feelings, I have to inform you that I shall myself immediately write to my Lord Farnborough, telling him how I am forced, by circumstances, to disclose a conversation which took place in the fancied privacy of my own house. I shall also mention the subject of that conversation;"—he paused, and involuntarily closed his eyes for a moment—"and that—my—unfortunate murdered son was present, and probably heard what was said; and shortly afterwards left the Castle. This I intend to do, sir, immediately; and then, sir, I presume your end will have been so far answered," said the Earl, momentarily resuming his usual sternness of tone and manner. Mr Hylton bowed in silent acquiescence. "And what inference do you think proper, sir, to draw from this circumstance, touching my unhappy son's murder?" the Earl proceeded to inquire, with ill-subdued vehemence, and a voice in which a faint tremor was perceptible.

"My Lord," replied Mr Hylton calmly, "I do not profess to draw any inferences. I know not that I am entitled to draw any, nor that I am able to do so."

"This babbling Captain told you, sir, I believe, that the late Lord Alkmond seemed disturbed—distressed—at the conversation?"

"Certainly he did, my Lord."

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"And of course, sir, you placed implicit reliance on what he said? and were ready to act on what a man in his cups fancied that he observed in another? But I cannot pursue this further, sir," said the Earl, having slightly changed colour. "And now, concerning this other letter."

That also his lordship read entirely through. When he had done, he said, with a contemptuous air, "It did not require Lord Farnborough's talents to dispose of *this* flimsy farce! But are *you* satisfied on this point also, sir?"

"My Lord, I cannot carry the matter further, and look upon it, after the two letters which your lordship has before you, as concluded; or at least placed beyond *my* judgment or responsibility."

"And *what then*, sir?" inquired Lord Milverstoke, eyeing Mr Hylton steadfastly.

"What then, my Lord, indeed?" echoed Mr Hylton, with a deep sigh.

"I will tell you, sir. Justice will be satisfied, and a lesson taught to those who have striven to defeat it."

"My Lord, pardon me, I cannot sit silent while"—

"I tell you, sir," continued the Earl excitedly, "that you must and shall sit silent before him whom you have so deeply injured, whose feelings you have outraged, whose heart you have wrung, whose soul you have tortured almost to madness. I tell you, sir, that you have acted in vain and presumptuous defiance of common sense, the law of the land, and the principles of justice; and most deliberately stabbed hearts into which it was your province rather to have poured sympathy and consolation. How, sir, shall you ever make me amends for the days and nights of misery which your intrusive meddling and false humanity have occasioned me? Was your object, sir, to hold me up as a mark for the arrows of calumny? To earn for yourself the reputation of the good and merciful, at my expense, coarsely careless of the peace of my family? To make me appear, I say, vindictive and relentless, that you might appear the reverse? But, doubtless, you have been partially successful; and I beg of you to spend an early day next week, a *very* early day, sir, in humiliation and fasting, that you may acquire a smarting sense of your inhumanity, and possibly even learn a little humility, and to place less confidence in your own somewhat overweening and presumptuous judgment! Oh, let me hear, sir, what you have to say! By all means, Mr Hylton; plausibility will not even now desert you!" said the Earl, with a most bitter smile, it being the first approach—but such an one!—to a smile of any kind that had been seen in his features since his son's death.

"My Lord, I see before me, in your lordship, only a cruelly injured and bereaved father; your lordship sees in me only an humble clergyman, unable, and indisposed, even were he able, to resent insult, or *render railing for railing*. I dare not, I cannot, take or feel offence at anything which has just fallen from your lordship; and I believe that, though your words are sharp and cutting, your lordship meant not offence against one who never uttered a disrespectful or hasty word to your lordship; who at this moment, God be my witness, loves and pities your lordship"—

"I thank you, sir," interposed the Earl loftily.

—"And sympathises with your sufferings," continued Mr Hylton, calmly. "But, my Lord, I choose to appeal for a moment, confidently, to your own high feelings. I call upon you to remember my sacred character and office, and to bear with me while I solemnly denounce, in the name of Him whom I serve, your present fierce, unchristian, implacable spirit!"

"Mr Hylton," said the Earl, his eyes glistening with fury, "I would be tranquil and temperate with you, in spite of your provoking me to forget what is due to myself, as well as you. Pray, sir, exercise, in your amazing meekness!—a little discretion; and consider whether you are not guilty of inordinate assumption

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in thus addressing him whom you have injured, and towards whom you express no single word of regret or apology!"

"For what, my Lord, am I to apologise?" inquired Mr Hylton mildly.

"If your own heart do not tell you, sir, words of mine are unavailing. And now that you have, perhaps, no fresh indignity to offer me under the guise of saintly counsel and rebuke"—Mr Hylton gazed earnestly at the Earl, but evidently with no intention to interrupt him, and with a look which made the Earl falter for a second or two—"let me, in my turn, presume to offer *you* some advice; to give you, sir, a recommendation, and methinks a very solemn one. To the prison, sir—to the cell of the justly doomed betake yourself, and make efforts which, I would fain hope, may not even yet be unavailing, to repair the almost mortal mischief that you have done! Try, sir, to turn the guilty eye which is there *again* to hereafter—that eye which you have diverted fatally to earth! Calm *that* spirit! Collect *those* wandering and distracted thoughts! Clear away the confusion which you have *there* created! Be *this*, reverend sir, for some few days to come, your terrible task!"

"I have not, my Lord," said Mr Hylton calmly, when the Earl had ceased, "your lordship's known eloquence, your powers of blighting sarcasm—gifts from God, for wise purposes, towards yourself and others, and not weapons to be thus used against an unoffending, though most unworthy, servant of that Great Giver! who is Lord of Lords, and King of Kings! Oh, my Lord! my Lord! to the condemned cell my steps shall, indeed, soon be bent! Its poor occupant shall have my fervent prayers, my most affectionate offices! I will prostrate by his side my own unworthy soul before the awful throne of God, now, I humbly trust, brightening before his eye, from which are falling fast away the films of earth. I will try, unscathed by your causeless curse, to lift up those trembling hands, and support those feeble knees: and oh! my God! for His sake, who ever liveth to make intercession for us, assist my efforts on that occasion; and before he, this poor victim of error, go hence, may he declare his forgiveness of those who express no forgiveness towards him!"

No man living could have then seen and heard Mr Hylton, unmoved: what dignity and solemn tenderness were in his every look, his every word! The Earl of Milverstoke gazed at him in silence, as he spoke; and when he paused, said, with some effort to retain his former sternness of tone, "Sir, this is very eloquent and moving, and quite in the style of your profession!—but endeavour to be reasonable and just. Have I said, sir, that I would extend no forgiveness towards this unhappy wretch?"

"*Do you feel that you can*, my Lord?" inquired Mr Hylton, and his eyes seemed to search the soul of Lord Milverstoke, whose wasted and agitated features were suddenly flushed, but he spoke not: "one word—one such word, my Lord, from those *truthful* lips of yours would be indeed"—

"Are you my confessor, sir?" inquired Lord Milverstoke sternly.

"No, my Lord, I am not; but still one who, till I may be dismissed, am intrusted with sacred functions towards your lordship and your household. I charge you, my Lord, by your hopes of eternal life and happiness, passing through the forgiveness of injury—I charge you, my Lord, to give me authority, on your behalf, to tell this"—

"Let not my name be mentioned in that place of guilt and pollution!" said the Earl with great excitement. "By what authority, sir, do you presume thus to talk to me? to tell me that you are entitled to ask me such a question? If between my God and myself I endeavour to do my duty towards Him and towards man—who shall interfere? Sir, you still *are*, at present, one of my chaplains, and I forbear; but you will find it prudent to pursue these topics no further."

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Mr Hylton bowed with sad respectfulness. "I ask your lordship to bear with me—possibly for the last time that I may be seen, or my voice be heard, within your lordship's residence—in your lordship's presence. Change, for a moment, the case that is now, my Lord; and suppose that Adam Ayliffe had been the murdered man, and your lordship unjustly accused as the murderer, and doomed to die, though innocent—to be ignominiously hanged, my Lord—your big, proud heart bursting indignantly amidst universal yet undeserved execration"—

"Why, sir, will you exercise your rhetorical powers upon *me*? I have acknowledged your eloquence; I add to it, if it gratify you, that you are a master of your art; you display powers, sir, that I never dreamed of your possessing; and, to show you the gross injustice of your accusation against me, if ever it be in my power to contribute towards placing your talents in a more conspicuous position—of usefulness, I mean, sir,—I will pledge myself to do it. Yes, sir, heartily, zealously—from motives unimpeachable by God or man. Is not *that* a forgiveness of injury? For, sir, I tell you that I bear an almost intolerable sense of the injury which you have done me—which you continue to do me—injury with which you are now mingling *insult!*—insult, sir—bitter insult! I feel that you are absurdly striving to practise upon my feelings, and to trifle with my understanding! Yes I do, sir," added the Earl, darting towards Mr Hylton a glance of mingled fury and scorn.

"Forgive me, my Lord Milverstoke; you cannot have arrived deliberately at that conclusion; and you are wronging yourself, and not me! Oh, my Lord, my Lord, my question remains unanswered! Your expressions of intended good towards *me*, I am constrained to receive with implicit credence: but I ask no forgiveness for myself; it is for"—

"Pshaw, sir! Now, let me remind you of a passage that you know well—Why see you the mote that is in my eye, and not the beam that is in your own? 'Tis almost descending to the ridiculous, sir; but it is you who force that descent—you, preacher of humility to others! see with what tenacious conceit and pride you refuse to own *your* faults, and proudly disclaim a proffered forgiveness!"

"God must judge between us, my Lord," said Mr Hylton, with a sigh. "I am not conscious of feeling that which you impute to me."

"That, sir, I believe," interposed the Earl bitterly; "and now we understand each other!"

"But if aught in me—my speech, my manner, anything that I have said or done—have given offence, I disclaim all intention of doing so, and ask your lordship's forgiveness most sincerely, and thankfully will receive it."

"You have it, sir."

"And now, my Lord"—

"Pursue the subject no further, sir," interrupted the Earl, "lest you should clean provoke me out of all patience. I know what you would repeat and reiterate. Would you not be well pleased to see me accompany you, and present myself with you in the cell of—of"—the Earl stopped, shuddering, and recoiling from the presence which he had conjured up.

"If you even did, my Lord, it might stand you in stead, hereafter, before the awful bar of God, when you and I, and this your abhorred and despised fellow-man, are standing to receive our final and irrevocable judgment!" As Mr Hylton said this, he dropped his head involuntarily, and spoke in a very thrilling tone as he continued—"There, also, will stand one who, could he now speak from amidst the silence of the grave, would say only—*Forgive!* In his name, my Lord, I"—

"Oh, you presumptuous, horrible, and most barbarous person!" exclaimed Lord Milverstoke, starting up from his seat, his features flushed, his eyes glaring with fearful expression at Mr Hylton; "is the grave not sacred from your vile, profaning touch, your polluting presence?"—he walked to and fro, apparently almost gasping for breath. "Leave the room, sir!—leave me!—never let my eyes light on you

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again!—you, whose miscreant hand would pluck out my heart, and trample upon it and the mangled body of my son together!—Out upon you!"

"May God forgive me, my Lord, if"—

"Silence! A word, sir, and you drive me to madness!" The Earl stood still for a few moments, pressing both his hands upon his head. "And all this—all this—to save"—he gasped—"from the gallows—a wretch—a bloodstained wretch.—Look you, sir, look! So let him perish!" and rushing forward towards the table, on which stood a large and costly lamp, he struck it down with frenzied violence, and they were instantly in darkness. "Begone, sir!"

"I go, my Lord; and so may not YOU go, hereafter, into OUTER DARKNESS! Amen! Oh God! Amen!" exclaimed Mr Hylton, at the same time slowly groping his way towards the door, and along the wall near which he had been standing.

"Begone! messenger of Satan, sent to buffet me!" cried the Earl, with hoarse vehemence, stamping his foot furiously on the floor; and when Mr Hylton had nearly reached the door, and was considering whether he should make one more effort, before quitting the Castle for ever, he heard a loud groan issue from the Earl, and then a sound as of one falling heavily.

Mr Hylton hastily opened the door, and with great presence of mind avoided calling out for assistance, lest he should fatally alarm Lady Alkmond, whose apartments were, though at some distance, in that quarter of the Castle. With as little disturbance as was possible under the circumstances, assistance was soon procured for the Earl, the library within a few minutes' time being crowded with servants and others; who, it may easily be imagined, were fearfully shocked on entering, with lights, the darkened room, where they found on one side of the library table the Earl stretched insensible on the floor, and on the other the scattered fragments of the lamp which he had, in his sudden frenzy, destroyed. Happily medical aid was instantly at hand. The physician resident in the Castle, in attendance upon Lady Alkmond, expressed no surprise at the illness of the Earl, whom he had known to be for some time in a state of considerable excitement, and who had during that very day complained to him of indisposition. It could not be for some little time pronounced whether Lord Milverstoke was suffering from an attack of apoplexy; but the remedies applied had reference to such an alarming visitation, and he was profusely bled on the spot, and then carried to bed—a messenger being immediately despatched to the county town for the attendance of the consulting physician, a person of great skill and eminence. Mr Hylton stayed for some time, in such a state of anxiety and distress as seemed likely, combined with his own long-continued excitement and fatigue, to precipitate him also into serious illness. To the amazed and troubled inquiries of those whom he had summoned into the room, Mr Hylton answered merely that the Earl had been engaged up to almost the last moment in anxious conversation on the subject of recent events, and especially upon one which would probably occur within a few days. Fortunately, he was not asked how they came to be in darkness, and the lamp broken upon the ground; and it was naturally supposed that the lamp might have been overthrown accidentally in the hurried movements of Mr Hylton in obtaining assistance. As calmly as he could, under circumstances of such an agitating kind as those which had happened just previously to his quitting the Castle, he considered, on his ride homeward, what course was now proper to be adopted with reference to answering the inquiries which the Secretary of State had directed to be addressed to him. As he conceived it requisite that no time should be lost, he hastened on to the parsonage; and in time for despatch by that night's coach, which passed at midnight through the village, he addressed the following letter to the Under Secretary of State:—

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"PARSONAGE, MILVERSTOKE.

"SIR,

"I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 15th instant, and to express the deep and grateful sense which I entertain of Lord Farnborough's anxiety to see justice done in a case which I humbly conceive (however erroneously) to be one of peculiar difficulty and responsibility. I made the representations to the Lord Chief Justice, which were substantially of the nature mentioned in your letter, under a strong conviction of the responsibility which attached to me in making them. I have now to inform my Lord Farnborough that, after great efforts, and partly through an accident, I have discovered the nature of the occurrence which immediately preceded Lord Alkmond's departure from the Castle to the wood. It consisted of a conversation, merely, among some of the guests left at the table, after Lord Milverstoke and others had quitted it, Lord Alkmond remaining behind. A topic was casually introduced, which led to rather animated conversation, and which was observed to be extremely disagreeable, and even painful, to Lord Alkmond, who took no part in it; and, finding it persevered in, quitted the room, and was not seen afterwards alive by any of the guests at the Castle. The gentleman who first told me of this circumstance was one of those who had dined at the Castle on that occasion; and hearing, after the trial of this case, of a remark which had fallen from the Lord Chief Justice, sent for me, and told me of the fact of this conversation, but declined mentioning what was the subject of it, until he should have received my Lord Milverstoke's permission. I have just quitted the Castle; where, I lament to say, that while I was with his lordship, he was seized with sudden—and possibly, I fear, serious—illness; such as will probably render it impossible for his lordship to do what he explicitly declared to me that it was his intention to do to-morrow—namely, to write and inform my Lord Farnborough, that the conversation in question was on the subject of *duelling*. I conceive, under the special circumstances of the case, that I am justified in making this disclosure; to which, however, I trust Lord Farnborough will give no publicity, unless it be deemed absolutely necessary for the ends of justice. I feel bound in candour to state, that after anxious reflection during this day, I am at a loss to suggest any probable connection between the happening of this conversation and the perpetration of the murder; nor have I, at present, any reason to believe that more light can be thrown on the subject, notwithstanding the possibility of the fact proving to be otherwise, were time allowed for further inquiry. And I must add, that the Earl of Milverstoke has repeatedly and most explicitly stated to me, that he knew no reason whatever for Lord Alkmond's being agitated by such a conversation as that above mentioned; and could not conjecture what bearing it could have upon the horrible murder of the late lamented Lord Alkmond.

"I have been made aware of what passed before Lord Farnborough and yourself, relating to this matter. I have no new facts or suggestions to offer on this subject, which I must now finally leave in the hands of his lordship, under the direction of a superintending Providence. I cannot, however, abstain from adding, that my own conviction of the prisoner's innocence remains unshaken; but, at the same time, I cannot deny the strength of the case against him, if regarded solely with reference to the facts established at the trial.

"I have the honour to be, Sir,

"Your obedient servant,

"HENRY HYLTON.

"The Hon. H. J. C. Wylmington."

"Alas, Adam! my poor friend! I fear all is over! I have done my best—but in vain," were the words with which, on the ensuing morning, Mr Hylton led into his library old Ayliffe, who had come down to learn the final result of Mr Hylton's benevolent exertions: having walked for that purpose all the way from the county town where his

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son lay awaiting death. Ayliffe clasped his hands together in silence, and looked unutterable things at Mr Hylton, who seemed unable to bear the misery that gleamed upon him from those penetrating blue eyes, the expression of which he had, in happier days, so often admired.

"Then he must die!" faintly exclaimed the old man, after awhile, his eyes never having wandered for even an instant from those of Mr Hylton, who only shook his head, in sad affirmance of Ayliffe's words. "Oh! let me return to my son!" said the old man, slowly rising. "Adam! my son! my son! would God I might die with thee! How we could uphold one another in passing through the deep waters! Wilt thou not pray for us, sir, that God would be with us in this bitter hour?"

"Ay, my poor brother, let us kneel before Him who will see, and hear, and answer us, though it may not be as we would at this moment desire!"

Mr Hylton gently assisted Ayliffe to his knees (for he appeared bewildered, though he had spoken calmly); and sinking on his own, with faltering voice addressed a short and fervent prayer to the Almighty, that He would vouchsafe support to those who reverently strove, whether living or dying, to yield themselves to His sovereign will in all things.

"The blessing of an old man, sonless, be upon thee and thine, thou minister of God!" said Ayliffe, when they had risen from their knees; and his countenance, voice, and gesture seemed, as he spoke, scarcely to be of this world.

"Amen, Adam! amen!" said Mr Hylton, grasping his hands affectionately.

"Is it fixed that my son die on Monday?" inquired Ayliffe, with dreadful calmness.

"It is—alas! it is!" replied Mr Hylton; "I see now no earthly means whatever of delaying the day, or preventing the execution of the law."

"Friday!—Saturday!—Sunday!" said Ayliffe, gazing intently at Mr Hylton.

"Yes, Adam; three days! only three! How important are they for HEREAFTER!"

"And then my son is no more on earth! Let me go to my son! I stay too long from him!" The old man rose from his seat, and, walking slowly to the door, taking his hat in one hand and his staff in the other, exclaimed, as if to himself, "Adam! Adam! I am coming to thee!"

"How go you, Adam, my dear friend? Have you any conveyance thither?" inquired Mr Hylton earnestly. His words seemed for a moment to rouse his unhappy companion.

"God will guide me! If he do not give me strength, I die by the way; for truly, truly, sir, my heart is faint within me, and my knees tremble!"

"Remain a moment till my return," said Mr Hylton, hurriedly—and presently came back, accompanied by Mrs Hylton, who, in tearful silence, assisted her husband in pouring out a glass of wine, which the old man took with thankfulness, his hand trembling the while; and observing Mrs Hylton in tears, he shook his head mournfully, attempting to speak to her, but his lips uttered no audible sound. At that moment their little daughter timidly approached the door, and, entering the room, stole beside her mother, looking at those around her apprehensively and in silence. Then the old man's feelings gave way, as he gazed at her; the tears forced themselves down his cheeks; he shook his head for some time, evidently struggling for speech; and at length said, in a faint voice, "The Lord bless thee, little one!"

"Lay thy hands upon her, Adam, and give her thy blessing, thou suffering saint!" said Mr Hylton; and gently placing his daughter before the old man, he put his hands upon her head, and solemnly and tremulously repeated his words, "The Lord bless thee! Amen!"

Shortly afterwards he quitted the parsonage, and would not hear of any assistance being provided to enable him to return to the gaol. Mr Hylton pledged himself to visit the unhappy convict, if possible, on that very day; "Though I tell you, Adam, it

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will be a far sorer trial to me than I can well bear. I trust, however," he continued, with great emotion, "that your poor son is satisfied that I have not lightly lengthened his sufferings."

"Oh, sir! reverend sir! If it were lawful for man to bow to man, my poor Adam would fall on his knees before thee, and even kiss the dust off thy feet!"

"Let him receive me calmly, Adam, I entreat thee; or I may not be able to discharge the solemn office which I shall have gone to perform—to administer such counsel and comfort as God may enable me. Farewell now, Adam, for a while; and tell your son, if I be not with him before you are, that I am coming—that I will not, I cannot, desert him."

Within a few hours afterwards, Mr Hylton, after a melancholy ride thither, entered the gaol, and took an opportunity, before going to the condemned cell, of seeing the chaplain—an excellent person; exemplary in the discharge of his duties at the prison, and who had been unremitting in his attentions to Ayliffe. The first word uttered by the chaplain concerning him not a little agitated Mr Hylton.

"Poor soul!" said the chaplain, "he is about to ask you to use your influence as a magistrate with the authorities (I told him that I knew it would be in vain), that when he has suffered, his body may not be given over to be anatomised, but be buried in your churchyard, in the same grave with his mother, and that you will bury him."

"I—I—cannot, then, see the unhappy man to-day! My feelings are already overpowered. I am quite unfit to discharge the duty which I came to endeavour to do," said Mr Hylton—and his disturbed countenance and gestures confirmed what he said. "Is his father with him?"

"No; he has not yet returned from Milverstoke. He was to have seen you, and asked you, in his son's name, to do what I have just mentioned."

"He *has* been with me," said Mr Hylton, almost in tears; "but his heart must have failed him; he said not a word to me on the dismal subject."

"That old man is piety personified! His reverent submission to the will of God, in this awful dispensation of His providence, has made all my own past teachings, my dear friend, seem poor and ineffectual—every act of my life a shortcoming. His image is ever before my eyes; his voice, solemn and calm, ever sounding in my ears. I sit, in spirit, at his feet!"

"I, my friend, have long done so! And his son, does he waver in asserting his innocence?"

"No, not for a moment; he is firm as at the first—declaring his belief that, when too late, it will be shown that the deed was done by others, and that he knew nothing of it whatever. Once he showed unusual emotion on the subject, and, drawing himself up with an air of true dignity, if ever I saw dignity in man, exclaimed, 'No murder could I do at all; but least of all could I strike, coward-like, from behind. When I think of *that*, and that people can believe that Adam Ayliffe, an Englishman, did so, I feel as though my heart would clean burst, for shame and anger!'"

Mr Hylton listened to this in agitated silence, for he could not speak.

"And, in truth," continued the chaplain, "there is something noble in the poor fellow's features, and their expression is of a pure frankness, such as never, I am sure, masked the heart of a murderer. I have come to your conclusion, and I terribly fear that this man is going to suffer wrongfully. But what can be done? Who is to be blamed? Consider that the gloomy position which exposed him to the gallows was sought out by himself; and, as we cannot see with God's eyes, human justice must do the best it can. I have, I think, satisfied Ayliffe that a fairer trial than he had could not have been. I have said to him, 'Had you been a sworn juryman, as your father has several times been, and on such a trial as yours, your verdict, on your oath, must have been Guilty;'—and he was silent."

"In what state of feeling is he, now

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that he believes his doom to be unchangeably fixed?"

"Then it really *is* fixed?" inquired the chaplain suddenly, and very gravely.

"I doubt no more that he will suffer on Monday, than that the sun will rise on that morning. Alas! I am too well able to express that conviction. I have left no stone unturned; have moved in high—nay, the highest—places in vain. Only last night, there was a truly awful scene between Lord Milverstoke and me, the consequence of which I cannot foresee; for he was seized with a fit while I was with him, endeavouring, to the best of my ability, to induce upon him a Christian temper of forgiveness and mercy."

"Is his lordship, then, stern and implacable as ever?"

"Indeed, I fear he is; but God grant that, in my zeal, I may not have gone further than my duty warranted. My heart bleeds for his sufferings; so did it all the while I was with him. But, alas! his will is as iron, seemingly not softened by affliction."

"Oh, what a contrast—what a contrast to this old man Ayliffe! Before I leave you," said the chaplain, suddenly placing his hand on Mr Hylton's arm, and speaking with an air of peculiar solemnity, "let me say, that you must, with me, attend the prisoner in his last moments! He will expect it—nay, I believe he will this day ask you to do so!"

"Oh, my dear friend," replied Mr Hylton, rather faintly, "forgive me! —I pray you, cease! Surely sufficient for the day is the evil thereof!"

"True, my friend; but prepare you for the painful question: and therefore only do I mention it. And now you must lose no time, if you would be of service to the prisoner. You will find two Prayer-books in the cell: and will probably see the prisoner reading in the great old Bible of his father."

"Adam! God be with you!" exclaimed Mr Hylton, as soon as the turnkey had unlocked, unbarred, and thrown open the door of the cell.

Poor Ayliffe rose eagerly, the clanking of his heavy fetters sickening the soul of his sorrowful visitor, whose hand he grasped convulsively, and then carried to his lips, but spoke not a word.

"Alas, Adam! I have only gloomy tidings for you, if you need to be told them: all earthly hope is now utterly extinguished! The day of your departure is near at hand. I feel it a sacred duty to assure you that, on Monday morning—*on Monday morning, Adam* —the will of God will be accomplished on you. Then He who gave you life, will take it from you: He who placed you on earth, will remove you from it. May you, Adam, be ready for that tremendous change!"

Finding that Ayliffe was firmly grasping his hand, and sighing deeply, but apparently not suffering violent emotion, Mr Hylton, in a low earnest tone, continued to address him.

"Regard this transitory life, henceforth, as over—fled like a dream—gone as a shadow—yet leaving its traces in most awful responsibility, on account of what has been done in that brief space, in that fleeting dream and passing shadow! Look upward! For that is your spirit formed—of that, made capable. Be not disheartened, —be not presumptuous! It is fearful to look back on the long array of sins which you have committed, known only to God and yourself, to whom He may now have made many visible, which had before been forgotten! What sins wilfully committed! what stifling of the voice of conscience!—what myriad holy warnings disregarded! Let not the foul tempter and enemy of mankind, in these your last hours, deceive you: be prepared against him. He will strive, as I know he has striven, to tell you of great sins, and little sins, and that none which you have committed do deserve this punishment which is inflicted upon you—nay, he will impiously tell you that this death, which is coming on you, is unjust!"—Here Ayliffe heaved a profound sigh, but made no attempt to speak. "Whether you die innocent of the crime for which the law of man has declared your life forfeit, God perfectly knoweth, as you cannot doubt;

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and if your conscience be herein void of offence towards God and man, God forbid that such a consciousness should nevertheless lead you down to destruction, by inciting profane and rebellious thoughts! Adam, as a servant of the living God, I earnestly warn you against this deadly snare and danger, and remind you that, as you cannot escape in anywise from the power of God Almighty, you must needs resign yourself into His hands, whose wisdom is unsearchable, infinitely past finding out, but also whose goodness and justice are perfect and absolute: and in this dispensation, which appears to you strange and unreasonable, yet in a moment—in the twinkling of an eye—He could reveal abundantly sufficient grounds and reasons for this His ordering. He may not be pleased to do so with you in this life, though possibly, when you are gone, He may vouchsafe to make plain all that now seems mysterious and confounding. And He may not choose now to show you a reason for what He doth with you, because He will have you thoroughly exercise your faith and obedience, as the condition of your immortal soul entering into happiness with Him, that can have no end. And, though you die innocent of this particular act charged against you, and so, in the language of men, die unjustly—(yet forget never that this evil overtook you when seeking revenge, and indulging malignity most utterly abhorrent to God, and contrary to all religion)—yet, Adam! think of One who, ignominiously dying, asked that, *if it were possible, the cup* of agony and death *might pass from Him*, yet submitted to the will of His Father, and, knowing no sin, *died yet the just for the unjust!* Adam! let this thought kindle your spirit into faith and love!"

"Oh, sir, there—there are all my hopes: all is darkness, but there! And when I am, though only for a moment, put off that thought and hope, I sink! and am quite undone!"

This Ayliffe said very earnestly, and in a way that greatly consoled and encouraged Mr Hylton, who then spoke long and movingly to him of the glorious but awful Presence in which they were; and brought distinctly before him the gracious promises, but also the strict conditions, of the Gospel. Poor Ayliffe's answers told Mr Hylton of the constant presence and teaching of old Ayliffe, whom Mr Hylton likened to the guardian angel of his son.

"And now, Adam, one question I must ask you, and the answer must be a true one, and it will tell at once whether your peace and hopes for hereafter be well or ill founded. Do you, from your heart and soul, forgive all mankind—even those whom you think to have most grievously wronged you?"

"Ay, sir, I do; God be thanked, I do!" replied Ayliffe, quickly and heartily, and with such a heavenly smile on his features that Mr Hylton felt an indescribable awe in looking at him and listening to him.

"Do you forgive Lord Milverstoke?"

"Oh, sir, why should I be angered with him? His son has been murdered, and he thinks that I did that murder! But he has done nothing of malice against me, who die—not through *his* will or moving—according to the law of the land. Never in this case have I felt malice towards my Lord, so God be my witness!"

"There is another, Adam," said Mr Hylton, pointedly.

"I know, sir, whom you mean—one that has truly been my enemy, and the foe of my father and me."

"I mean Mr Oxley, Adam."

"I do clearly and perfectly forgive him, as I do hope myself to be forgiven; but I must say the truth, sir—it has been a long and a hard business to do this. But God has heard prayer for me, and helped me to feel the forgiveness that I now profess; and I hope Mr Oxley will, when I am gone, bethink him of his unkindness towards those who never injured him, and were striving hard to live honestly, though near upon starving."

"And yet, Adam, is there one other"—

"Oh, sir, you speak of Hundle, that

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first led me into all this. Whatever he has done against me, I have forgiven—I do forgive! He was a cruel and deceitful man to me—but he must answer to God for it!"

"And have you, Adam—it is my duty to remind you—nothing to answer for against that man? With God, *intended* guilt is guilt—for He seeth into the heart!"

"I know it, sir! I know it!" replied Ayliffe, with a contrite air. "I went out to lie in wait for Jonas Hundle, with foul ill-will; and Satan might have urged me much further than I had meant; for I will own, sir, that as I walked in that wood, waiting to see him, when I thought of him, these fingers tightened like a vice round my stick. Oh, sir, a terrible business it might have been!"

"And all this, Adam, fully seen and known by Almighty God at the time! The forgiveness which you pray for, must first be shown by you—there must not be one spark of animosity lurking in your heart, or it will pollute the whole beyond cleansing! And have you thus thoroughly forgiven?"

"Ay, ay, I have, God being my witness! and from the time I first felt that I had done so, I was a changed man; and, even in these irons, felt for a while free and light-hearted! I have forgiven! I do—so may God forgive me!" said Ayliffe, with a look of such meek sincerity that Mr Hylton implicitly believed him, and said very cheerfully—

"Why, Adam! God hath been with you! and He is with you, and will be with you!"

"So I do humbly believe and hope, sir; yet I feel oftentimes sharp and bitter pains and pangs, and fall into darkness. There's one—nay, there be more, that I leave behind me—would that they went with me, if such were the will of God, and so were quit of a miserable world!"

"Beware of such thoughts, Adam! for they lead to unholy repinings and doubts. God may have good, or evil, in store for them; but only when He pleases will they go after you. In the course of nature, your good, your virtuous father must follow you, and it may not be long; but while he lives, surely you will be thankful that he is left here to watch, for a while, over those whom you love?"

"But, sir, there is a thing that does cruelly trouble my poor soul: where is their bread to come from? Who is to work for them when I am gone? Oh, sir! almost my last thoughts will be of that! My child is a poor, little, weak creature, and likely never to be able to stir for himself! Now would I cry, and could ever, when I think of him and Sarah: but I cannot cry! Tears will not come, though they might ease my heart, which feels hot and choked!"

"My poor friend!" said Mr Hylton, whose tears had fallen fast, "believe me when I assure you that God has already raised up a friend for those whom you will leave behind you. Cast your care on Him who careth for you: those whom you love will not, shall not, perish; they shall not come to want!"

Here Ayliffe put his hand into his bosom, and took out a small packet, neatly fastened with thread, and opened it. There were two small papers, and each contained a lock of hair.

"This is Sarah's, sir; and this is Adam's," said he; and he gave such a sad, heart-broken look, first at them, and then at Mr Hylton, that the latter turned aside his head to conceal his emotion.

"Ah, sir!" said Ayliffe calmly, and sighing, "I wish *my* tears could come; but I am past it!" Then he folded up the little precious remembrances, and replaced them in his bosom. "Are these to be buried with me, sir?" said he, with an ominous, a fearfully significant look at Mr Hylton; who, remembering what the chaplain had prepared him for, felt suddenly sick at heart.

"What answer can I give you, my poor friend?" inquired Mr Hylton, in a low tone, looking down; and there was a dismal silence.

"Oh, sir, cannot you, being a magistrate, beg off my poor body, for burial? Some pangs it might save me,

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to think that I lay in the blessed earth of our churchyard at Milverstoke, in my mother's grave—ah! you buried her, sir."

"I did, Adam—I did; may you soon meet her sainted spirit! And why care about the darkened dust that you leave behind you, if your *spirit* live for ever, in happiness"—

"Sir—good, kind sir—I cannot help it! It is the nature that I am made of! My flesh creeps to think that—that this body"—he shuddered visibly from head to foot.

"Poor friend! your feelings I respect — I would have your wishes attended to; but, alas! I have no power whatever. It pains me to remind you, Adam, of the sentence"—

"Oh, I heard it, sir!" said he, and seemed for a moment absorbed in a sickening recollection. "I know that so as my soul be right, it signifies little about my poor body; but I should not tell truth if I said that this thing did not grieve—nay, fright me. How I do think of it, sir! Do, sir, *promise* to do what you can!"

"I promise to do my utmost endeavour."

"Thank you, sir!" he replied with a deep sigh.

"And now I must leave you, Adam"—

He rose up suddenly, his irons rattling so as to startle Mr Hylton. "Not — not for ever, sir!" said Ayliffe, with wild alarm in his face, stretching his arms forwards.

"What do you mean?" inquired Mr Hylton faintly.

"Oh, sir! good, dear, merciful sir! do come to me again! I cannot die happy if I see you not again!"

"I will be with you again," faltered Mr Hylton; and, fearful of a more explicit promise being exacted from him, knocked at the cell-door, which was immediately opened. Then cordially grasping both the poor convict's hands, he fervently blessed him, and withdrew, with feelings much disturbed by the recollection of what had passed, and the prospect of the dismal scene which, after his promise, awaited him.

CHAPTER XV.

Feeling assured that he would be too much agitated by thoughts of the ensuing Monday morning, to admit of his doing duty at his church on the approaching Sunday, Mr Hylton succeeded in procuring the assistance of a friend; and when the hour of divine service had arrived, was thankful that he had been relieved from a duty which he then felt that he certainly could not have gone through—at least with the requisite degree of calmness and self-possession.

When the congregation, which was crowded, and very sad, saw Mr Hylton walk, unrobed, into his own pew, while a stranger entered the reading-desk, they too surely surmised the cause; and many eyed the harassed, benevolent countenance of their pastor, with beating hearts. He was once obliged to change his position; for, as he stood, his eye fell on the seats, now vacant, which had usually been occupied by old Ayliffe and his son. Oh, where were those two then? Where would *one* of them be at that time on the morrow? There were portions of the sublime service of the Church which fell on all ears, and sunk into all hearts, that day, like sounds from the unseen world!—When arrived at the appropriate part of the service, the minister paused for a moment, and

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amidst deathlike silence said—"The prayers of this congregation are desired for several persons dangerously ill, *and for one appointed to die!*"

The responses to the Litany were but faintly audible; yet they came from the depths of hearts smitten with sympathy and fear.

All that day Milverstoke, though a secluded and rural district, afforded significant evidence of the excitement which pervaded the minds of those who lived in it and the neighbourhood. Many strangers came to the church, both morning and afternoon; and were afterwards to be seen talking in the churchyard, and at the doors of the houses. As Mr Hylton, with Mrs Hylton and their little Mary, walked on to the parsonage, the obeisances of those whom he passed were silent and almost reverential—bearing eloquent homage to his untiring, albeit ineffectual zeal, in the cause of humanity.

All were filled with concern at the final failure of his exertions to avert the fearful catastrophe which was to take place on the ensuing morning. The opinion of the neighbourhood upon the subject had undergone a great change, influenced by the profound respect which every one entertained for the Vicar, his character, and talents. "If such a man," it was said, and not without good reason, "were so satisfied of the innocence of Ayliffe, as to have persevered with his strenuous exertions on his behalf even up to the last moment, and had caused such doubts to be felt in the highest quarters as had led to the fortnight's respite, which, alas! was so awfully to end on the morrow—there must be cogent grounds for the belief on which he had acted." Rumour had got hold of some of the circumstances on which Mr Hylton had founded his futile hopes—and those circumstances had been, as is usually the case, exaggerated and misrepresented, but all in favour of Ayliffe. Vague whispers were heard of something having occurred at the Castle, on the night of the murder, of a mysterious character, connected with the officers. Captain Lutteridge's visits to the Castle had been noticed, and also those of Mr Hylton. The sudden illness of the Earl of Milverstoke, occurring just when it did, and especially while he was in consultation with Mr Hylton, gave a strange, dark complexion to the whole affair. But the most substantial of all these matters, was that founded on the facts which were alleged to have been witnessed from the sea, on the night of the murder,—two men, no one could conjecture who, seen running along the shore, as for their lives, in a direction from the wood, not many minutes after the murder had been committed! What was the inference? No one thought of the possibility that these two might have been accomplices of Ayliffe; but they were given credit for having been the sole perpetrators of the appalling murder, for which he was alone to die! Then, upon all this doubt and mystery, was brought to bear the excellent character which he had ever borne—one perfectly irreproachable till thus accused; one of a generous, affectionate, obliging nature: oh—said all—'twas *impossible* that he could be a murderer! Then thought they of the father! the wife! the child! Oh! how this last was hugged and kissed—all unconscious of the cause of such accumulated endearments—that Sunday afternoon, by the good, pitiful, weeping womenfolk of the village! With what awe was regarded the shut-up cottage of the Ayliffes, on which were written, in their eyes, desolation! and terror! and injustice! And, indeed, this dismal and mysterious affair had obtained notoriety, not only throughout the county, and those adjoining it, but the whole kingdom. The murder of the son and heir of a peer of the realm, and that one so powerful and eminent as the Earl of Milverstoke, might well, indeed, be regarded as an incident of national interest and importance.

The fortnight's respite had awakened, indeed, universal curiosity and apprehension, lest from any cause there should be an unhappy miscarriage of justice, by the escape of the guilty, or the sacrifice of the innocent. The authorities of the county were pre-

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pared for the attendance of a prodigious concourse, on the ensuing morning, to witness the execution of one who was either most terribly and irreparably wronged, or the most cowardly and bloody of murderers. Prudent precautions were taken, under these circumstances, to preserve the public peace. Many special constables were sworn in; every turnkey in the prison was armed, and their numbers were doubled. A strong party of soldiers, both horse and foot, was ordered to be in attendance, the former under the command of Captain Lutteridge (who heartily wished that he had been in another part of the country); and they were to march into the open space in the centre of the prison, at a very early hour in the morning. All this had been deemed necessary by the High Sheriff, as a matter of precaution, in consequence of certain intimations which had been conveyed to him, of its not being improbable that a rescue might be attempted—as had been the case, under less exciting circumstances, only half a year before, in another part of the kingdom, where a man had been executed who, being at the time believed, was afterwards proved, to have been innocent of the crime for which he died.

At seven o'clock on Monday morning, Mr Hylton, pale and harassed, made his appearance at the chief gate of the prison on horseback; having, not without some difficulty, got through the throng of persons pouring down to the gaol; in front of which stood—sickening spectacle! the expectant scaffold, already surrounded by a great and continually increasing crowd—though the brief work of death was not appointed to take place before nine o'clock. When Mr Hylton had ridden within the gates, and before he had dismounted, his eye fell on Captain Lutteridge, who, the reins of his horse being held by one of his men, was walking slowly to and fro with folded arms before the troopers. His features were stern and gloomy, and he returned Mr Hylton's hasty and somewhat agitated salutation in silence. It was a calm, bright spring morning; and the hedges and trees which Mr Hylton had passed were all beginning to put on their glistening verdure; and the birds were hopping and fluttering about, free as the air, and chirping and singing merrily! Mr Hylton had sighed only the more heavily for observing them. He found the chaplain robed and waiting for him, as they had appointed, and, without having spoken more than a word or two, followed him towards the condemned cell, where, shortly after their arrival, the Sacrament was to be administered. The door stood open—three turnkeys being near it, on the outside, each with his blunderbuss; and Mr Hylton's knees trembled beneath him, and he felt deadly faint, at the first glance he got of the occupants of the cell—father and son silently locked in each other's arms. Not a word had they been heard to speak for nearly half an hour.

"Do not—do not disturb them; I cannot go in," whispered Mr Hylton; and they both withdrew, returning to the room which they had quitted. The chaplain spoke not to him, nor he to the chaplain, for some time.

"But that my word is given to this poor soul, I could almost pray to be disabled from witnessing this appalling scene," at length said Mr Hylton.

"Courage — courage, my dear brother!" replied the chaplain firmly; "the voice of duty calls you hither; and you shall now see such piety and virtue in trouble, and in death, too, as shall for ever hallow this morning's scene in your memory. I have myself been on my knees, and in tears, beseeching God that the lesson which I am this morning learning may be written on my heart till it cease to beat! and that he would give me fortitude fittingly to discharge my sacred duties on this awful morning! Be not apprehensive; our charge is subdued into a sublime calmness, and has inquired after you with serenity almost approaching to cheerfulness. There is with him at this moment, as you indeed saw, a visible angel! But now let us return," said the chaplain, observing that Mr Hylton had recovered

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his composure. "All is in readiness for the last sacred rite of our religion!" Again they set out on their solemn errand.

"Adam, my friend," said the chaplain gently, on entering the cell, "here comes he whom you have asked for—Mr Hylton!"

The old man and his son were still locked in one another's arms, which, however, on the chaplain speaking, were slowly unloosed; and two such countenances presently looked on Mr Hylton, silently taking his seat beside them, as filled him with fear and reverence. Tearless were the eyes of both, but there was IMMORTALITY in their expression, a heavenly radiance on their solemn and wasted features. Neither father nor son spoke, while gazing calmly at Mr Hylton, who, as he grasped a hand of each, felt them to be cold as death, but there was no tremor in them. After a few moments, they again slowly folded their arms round each other.

"Speak, Adam; tell these good gentlemen what God hath done for thee! Speak, my son, for thy God! Hath he not taken all fear of death from thee?" said at length the old man in a low tone, but with great firmness.

"He hath! and I know it is He that hath done it, of his unspeakable mercy!" replied his son, who, leaning forward, kissed his father's white hair with gentle fondness and reverence.

"Here," said the old man, "is my only son; God gave him to me, and hath allowed us many years of love together. He is now taking him back again! I shall stay a little time after thee, Adam—only a little; and assuredly we meet again!"

"The blessing of the ever-merciful God be upon you, Adam—upon you both!" said Mr Hylton tremulously.

The prisoner slowly raised to his lips Mr Hylton's hand, and kissed it.

"I thank you, sir, for coming as you promised! But—I cannot speak much," said he, adding, with an air of infinite sweetness, "Oh! what love and pity you have ever shown me!" Here the chaplain made a sign to Mr Hylton that all was in readiness for the Sacrament, which was thereupon administered with an awful solemnity.

When it was over, "How much longer hath he to live?" inquired the father, with a faltering voice, as soon as he had risen from his knees, and kissed the forehead of his son. He spoke to the Under Sheriff, who had joined with them in the sublime ceremony which was just over.

"One hour and a half, or only a very few minutes more than that," replied that functionary, looking sadly at his watch.

"May my son and I pass that hour alone?" inquired the old man; and added, turning to his son, "Adam, wouldst thou not rather that we spend this our last hour together, with no eye on us but that of God?"

"Yes, I would," replied the prisoner, calmly; "but oh, sir! *remember!*" said he, turning towards Mr Hylton, and fixing on him an eye of mysterious expression.

"I do! I will!" replied Mr Hylton. "At the hour's close, I will, with God's permission, again be with you, and remain!" On this the prisoner grasped his hand with silent energy.

"We will now leave you," said the Under Sheriff, "for exactly one hour, and then it will be necessary for you to quit this room for another;" by which he meant the press-room, where the prisoner's irons were to be knocked off. All then withdrew, and the cell door was closed and locked. Word was from time to time brought to Mr Hylton and the chaplain, during the ensuing hour, that the occupants of the cell were engaged in almost constant prayer. The chaplain's room, in which, together with the Under Sheriff, they were sitting, overlooked the yard where the military stood; and shortly after they had entered this room, the window being open, Mr Hylton overheard the stern peremptory voice of Captain Lutteridge uttering a word or two to the dismounted dragoons, which were followed by the sounds of remounting. When the noise thus occasioned was over, both Mr Hylton and the chaplain distinctly

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heard the confused hum as of a great multitude, apparently close to them; and such was indeed the fact — the Governor taking occasion, as time wore on, to come into their room, and inform them that the concourse without was beyond all measure the greatest that he, or any one else in the prison, had ever seen collected together; but he added that the road through which they should have to pass to the fatal spot was very short, railed off, and guarded by a strong body of constables.

"And though we think it right to be prepared," he added, glancing down through the window significantly, "at present there has been not the slightest ground for apprehending any sort of disturbance." Mr Hylton took the opportunity of the Governor leaving the room to speak alone with the Under Sheriff, on a subject which sickened the speaker as he mentioned it.

"Must every portion—*every* portion of the sentence be carried into literal effect, Mr Under Sheriff?"

"Certainly, sir," he replied with a surprised air; but added quietly, "Oh! you mean, I daresay, whether the body must be given up to be dissected?" Mr Hylton nodded in silence.

"Assuredly," was the answer, "quite a matter of course, reverend sir, however painful to the friends or survivors of the criminal. It is a part of the sentence; and can on no account be dispensed with. Not," he whispered, with a significant look, "if I may say it between us, that supposing great interest were to be made, more than a *nominal*" — Here the prison bell began to toll—oh! dismal. dismal sound!—and the Under Sheriff suddenly started, ceased, took out his watch, and, observing the hour, withdrew in silence. In a few minutes' time, Mr Hylton heard a clanking sound, as of one passing their door in fetters; and, immediately afterwards, the chaplain informed him that the prisoner was going to the press-room, where his irons were to be removed, and then the final preparations would be made.

"Poor soul! he will now soon be out of his misery!" said the chaplain: and, as he spoke, a turnkey came silently, motioning them to follow him. Mr Hylton, with a beating heart, accompanied the chaplain into the chamber, where, as he entered, he saw a turnkey in the act of knocking off the prisoner's irons. Ayliffe stood erect, with calm and solemn countenance, his eyes fixed upwards, and his lips firmly compressed together; while his father, with both his hands grasping one of the prisoner's, had buried his head so that his face could not be seen. The tolling of the bell at intervals had an almost palsying effect upon the shaken nerves of Mr Hylton. There was a petrifying silence for a few moments, as soon as the irons had been removed from the prisoner; when Mr Hylton, with suddenly averted eyes, then observed approaching one whose ghastly office was only too manifest. But at that moment a hasty step was heard entering the room; and Mr Hylton, turning round, observed the Governor of the gaol, with a face blanched by strong emotion of some sort or other, rapidly beckon to the Under Sheriff, who instantly quitted the room.

"I devoutly hope," whispered the chaplain to Mr Hylton, with evident agitation, "that this is no riot or attempted rescue!"

They both turned towards the door, which still stood open, and Mr Hylton followed the Under Sheriff out of the room. In a few seconds afterwards he lost all sense of what was going on, and staggered unconsciously into the arms of the Governor, as the latter uttered the words—"A reprieve! Positively! A REPRIEVE!"

The Under Sheriff, with cool self-possession and thoughtful humanity, stepped instantly back to the press-room, and, without entering, locked the door; and then went to ascertain, beyond all doubt, how the fact really was. That something extraordinary had happened was evident. Outside was a prodigious commotion; inside were Captain Lutteridge and his dragoons, sword in hand, ready to charge

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at an instant's notice: but, thank God! there was no necessity for their services. A confused cry had, some few minutes before, been heard from the extremity of the crowd, which stretched round a large building, so as to be unable to catch any view of what was going on at the gaol; but turning the opposite way, on hearing sounds from that direction, they behold a startling sight—a post-chaise and four, with a horseman riding beside it, all at full gallop; and inside the chaise was a man waving something white.

"Stop! stop!—stop the execution! A reprieve! a reprieve!" was shouted by both the person inside the chaise and the horseman without. The cry was instantly caught, and presently an unusual thundering sound was heard from the vast concourse, echoing the word "Reprieve! reprieve! reprieve!"

Round the outskirts of the crowd was in a twinkling seen dashing along towards the back of the gaol, where stood the chief entrance, the post-chaise, with its occupant, and the accompanying horseman, each of whom bore a precious document, even under the royal sign-manual, both having been separately despatched from London, to prevent all possibility of accident; and just eighteen minutes before the prison clock struck nine, the two authoritative acts of mercy were in the hands of those to whom they were addressed, the representative of the High Sheriff, and the Governor of the gaol.

Ay, there had been no miscarrying—there was no mistake! The swords, carbines, and muskets of the expectant soldiery were not, thank God! to be turned upon the vast honest-hearted English crowd which stood outside, shouting, till their voices were well-nigh cracked, "Hurrah, hurrah! God save the King!"

On hearing all this, Captain Lutteridge hastily dismounted, and got sight of one of the documents which had proved of such prodigious potency. He quietly read it all over, and then somewhat quickly returned to the yard, and mounted his horse.

"My lads," said he, addressing the soldiers, "hearken to me, do you see. His Majesty the King, whose servants we are, hath been pleased to reprieve the prisoner, of his own good will and royal pleasure; whereupon, my lads, we may by-and-by return to our quarters, and in your hearts you may say, 'Long live King George;'—though that, doubtless, you do always; for you serve the best and greatest king on earth, that is certain."

The Captain was even meditating for a moment an extravagance—viz. to give his men leave to *shout* "God save the King!" but discipline and a sense of dignity repressed any such exuberant manifestation of enthusiasm. He looked, however, at their pleased faces with great inward satisfaction; and a smile nearly stole over his grave rigid features, as he said to himself,—"Those lads of mine are good lads; and methinks I know one that will make another of them, if this man that was to have suffered be he whom I have seen about Milverstoke. Piff! paff! If I can only catch hold of this Ayliffe, I'll have him pretty quickly clapped on horseback, and in the ranks—and a better trooper than he will make, is not to be seen. I'll warrant me he'll do a trifle of good service for his most merciful Majesty!"

But the Captain was here reckoning without his host. It was true that a pardon had arrived for poor Ayliffe, but only a conditional one, and that condition was—transportation to the colonies for life! When the astounding news of his deliverance was communicated to him whom they suddenly snatched out of the gaping jaws of death, the hangman had just completed pinioning the prisoner's hands.

"Loose those cords," said the Under Sheriff, as calmly as he could; and, holding in his hand the document on which he was acting, he approached Ayliffe, and said, "Adam Ayliffe, his Majesty the King hath sent thee a

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pardon under his own sign-manual, on condition that thou be transported for life.—God save the King: so thou well mayest say!"

The prisoner staggered back for some paces before the cords could be loosed, as ordered by the Sheriff.

"Come, lad! come, come!" quoth the executioner, following him, "take it steadily — take it quietly, lad! Thou'st plenty of time to think on't now, I assure thee, both here and elsewhere!"

But Ayliffe still staggered back, with the appearance of one stunned by some sudden blow. Then he sunk, with a half-stupefied air, on his knees, with his hands clasped together. From this position the executioner raised him, and seated him on a form which was near. In a few moments' time his face was covered with a clammy sweat—one, indeed, which had suddenly burst through every pore of his body. His grim attendant took out his pocket-handkerchief and wiped Ayliffe's face gently.

"Fetch him some water, Gregory," said the executioner to his man, who in truth had not yet quite recovered his own wits, which had been scattered by the suddenness of the affair.

He soon obeyed his master, and in a few moments' time returned with a cup of water. Ayliffe, however, seemed to recoil from the sight of it, and, as though with a choking sensation, hastily motioned off the hand that held it to his lips; and there was horror in his eye. At length he opened his mouth with a sudden gasp, and heaved a mighty sigh—and another—and another.

"This is right," quoth the executioner, patting him on the back; "he'll soon come to himself. Nay, lad, don't be frighted—I've done with thee! Why—how thou starest! Well," he added hastily, whispering, as he heard the Governor's well-known heavy step approaching the room, "Good-by, good-by, my man. I do think thou wouldst have done well, and stood it bravely outside!"

Ayliffe gazed vacantly at him, as the hideous functionary slunk away—all present seeming to breathe more freely when he was gone.

Old Ayliffe had fallen senseless on the floor the moment that he had heard the Sheriff's announcement, and lay there for some minutes quite unobserved; those present being sufficiently occupied with the person principally concerned in that day's tragic and agitating proceedings. The rescued prisoner, however, by-and-by recovered himself sufficiently to think of his venerable parent: but by the time that he was fully conscious of what had taken place, alas! he found himself the solitary tenant of a cell in the prison, whither he had been conveyed, almost unconsciously, by the Governor's order, for security's sake. In answer to his loud and agonising cries, he was presently informed by the Governor that his father was not well, having been somewhat overcome by the suddenness of that which had just taken place. The truth was, that the poor old man had lain insensible so long, in spite of all that could be done for him, as to alarm the gaol doctor for his safety. He was treated with all imaginable kindness, and taken to a chamber in the prisoner's part of the gaol—lying on the very bed which had been occupied, some few months before, by his unhappy son.

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CHAPTER XVI.

THERE was yet another person then within those gloomy walls on whom the marvellous occurrence of that morning had produced an overwhelming effect, and that was Mr Hylton; to whom alone was attributable, under Providence, the deliverance of Adam Ayliffe from the ignominious and horrible death which, to all human appearance, had been inevitable.

Impelled by an irresistible impulse, and fortified by an unwavering conviction of the prisoner's innocence, Mr Hylton on the Friday evening, as a last resource, had, relying on the King's well-known sternly independent character, written a letter to his Majesty, under cover to a nobleman, then in London attending Parliament, and with whom Mr Hylton had been acquainted at College. He earnestly entreated his lordship to lose not a moment in securing a personal interview with the King; or, at all events, the delivery into his Majesty's hands of the letter in question, touching, as it did, life and death; its object being to save from execution, on the Monday morning, a man who was, in the writer's opinion, as innocent of the death of which he had nevertheless been found guilty, as the Secretary of State himself, to whom application on behalf of the convict had been unhappily made in vain. Mr Hylton's letter to the King was expressed in terms of grave eloquence. It set out with calling his Majesty's attention to the execution, six months before, of a man, for a crime of which three days afterwards he was demonstrated to have been innocent. Then the letter gave a moving picture of the exemplary life and character of the prisoner, and of his father; pointed to testimonials given in his favour at the trial, and added the writer's own; together with the most emphatic and strong conviction which could be expressed in language, that whoever might have been the perpetrator of this atrocious murder, it was not the prisoner doomed to die on Monday. It then conjured his Majesty, by every consideration which could properly have weight with a sovereign intrusted with authority by Almighty God to govern according to justice and mercy, to give his personal attention to the case then laid before him, and act thereon, according to his Majesty's own royal and clement judgment. This letter Mr Hylton's noble acquaintance, happening to be absent from town for a few days, travelled thirty miles, at great inconvenience, to lay before the King; who did not receive it till past midnight, at St James's, and after he had been in bed for upwards of an hour. On hearing, however, from the nobleman who brought the letter, that it was one of a very urgent nature, concerning life and death, those who were intrusted with guarding the royal repose caused it to be broken by the delivery of the packet. His Majesty instantly got out of bed, and, after hastily glancing over the letter, ordered Lord Farnborough to be sent for immediately, with directions to bring along with him all the papers which he had, or could lay his hand on, relating to Adam Ayliffe, then lying under sentence of death for the murder of Lord Alkmond. His Majesty had paced his chamber many times, somewhat impatiently, before his astonished minister arrived: for the latter, being in bed when he received the royal summons, had had to go from his private residence to his

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office, in order to get the documents required by the King, and had experienced great difficulty in finding them; all clerks and others being, as might well be supposed, out of the way. Immediately on his entering the King's antechamber, Lord Farnborough encountered his Majesty, who with bluff earnestness begged him to be seated at a table, duly furnished with lights and writing materials, and then the King requested to be informed of the whole facts of the case; to which he paid great attention. When Lord Farnborough had, in his usual terse and emphatic fashion, given his own view of the matter, assuring his Majesty, with expressions of profound respect, that a clearer case for hanging there never had been, if justice were to be any longer administered in the country; his lordship appeared confounded when the King said, very thoughtfully, that he was by no means so clear on the subject as his lordship seemed; and in fact felt so uneasy on the matter, being one of life and death, that he could not return to bed without deciding one way or the other. Lord Farnborough assured the King that he need feel no anxiety whatever on a matter which was exclusively within the province of his ministers.

"But look you, my Lord Farnborough," quoth the King, somewhat hastily and sternly, "suppose you and I differ on this matter?"

"Please your Majesty, we are your Majesty's sworn responsible servants"—

"So, so, because you are my servants, my Lord Farnborough, I am to be your puppet, eh?—to register your decrees, *nolens volens!* By those that begot me, and those before me, but I will show you otherwise! Look you, my Lord, and all of you that serve me, I am set over my people to protect them, and am answerable for them to Him who set me over them: and if it cost me my crown, look you, as I must answer for it hereafter, I won't see the humblest creature calling me King deprived of his life, even though according to law (which can't give back life taken wrongly), if I in my conscience do verily doubt whether he ought to die."

Lord Farnborough said something rather faintly about a constitutional monarchy—

"Ay, ay," said the King, catching the word, "but I am also a conscientious King, my Lord. My advisers may be impeached in Parliament if they give me evil advice; but I have to answer to the King of Kings; and none but a King can tell a King's feelings in these matters. God only knows what I suffered some half a year ago, in a matter of this sort—eh, my Lord? What say you to that? Have you forgotten it?"

"Not at all, please your Majesty: but I take leave humbly to represent, Sire, in the matter now before your Majesty, that your Majesty, as the guardian of the laws, has no discretion herein, but must allow the law to take its course."

"I won't, I won't, my Lord. There are features about this case that I don't like; and, in short, I shall not have this man die. Transport him for life, if you please; then, if we be wrong, he may return: BUT — there are paper, pens, and ink; pray, my Lord, let it be done instantly, for time is precious; I will put my hand to it now—and then methinks I shall sleep soundly till morning."

"Pardon me, Sire," began his lordship, with an air of vast deference—

"No, no! not *you*—I have nought to pardon you; 'tis another I mean to pardon"—

"Sire, this really is one of the plainest cases of guilt"—

"Did you not say the very same thing to me, my Lord, on the occasion I have just spoken of?" inquired the King with stern solemnity: "did I not *then* say I had doubts? but I yielded to your *certainty*, my Lord! And what followed?"

"Please your Majesty, we are all frail; all human institutions are liable to error"—

"Therefore," said the King quickly, "ought we the longer to doubt in matters of life and death, my Lord."

"I do assure your Majesty that this

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interference of your Majesty will give great dissatisfaction"—

"To whom? Where? Why?" inquired the King with great dignity. "What is that to me, when my conscience is concerned, who have sworn an oath, when God Almighty placed my crown on my head, to cause law and justice, IN MERCY, to be executed in all my judgments? Who swore that oath, my people or I? I did, and, with God's assistance, will keep my oath. And as for my people, they are a brave and virtuous people, and won't obey me the less because I will not again let any one die on a gibbet hastily."

Lord Farnborough remained with his eyes earnestly fixed on the King, and his pen in his hand, which hung down by his side.

"Let it be done, my Lord," said the King, peremptorily: and his Minister obeyed.

Within a couple of hours' time, down went the messengers of mercy, whose arrival has been already duly told. The King went to bed very comfortably; the Minister returned to his, most exceedingly uncomfortable — with, as it were, a bee buzzing in each ear, and tickling, even to stinging, his consequence both personal and official; expecting to be questioned pretty sharply in Parliament on what had taken place. He resolved, however, that *then* he would loyally uphold his royal master's act at all hazards, and give him full credit for the noble spirit in which he had acted; and he would ask, what if it should afterwards turn out that, but for the King, this man would have been hanged innocent? And who should gainsay the propriety of the King's reference to the painful occasion of a former fatal and irreparable miscarriage of justice?

When Mr Hylton entered the cell where Ayliffe sat, now not fettered, the latter sprung from his seat, and then dropping on his knees, embraced those of Mr Hylton, crying like a child. Yet he knew nothing of that last interference of his exemplary benefactor, which had saved him, at the eleventh hour, from swinging a dishonoured corpse from the gallows which was at that moment being taken down.

"God has been very, very merciful towards you, Adam," said Mr Hylton, "and your spared life will be a monument of that mercy! Adam, now that no power on earth can again place you in jeopardy on this charge, I ask you, as in the immediate presence of your merciful God, are you innocent?"

"Oh, Mr Hylton! oh, kind and most beloved sir! how can you ask? Do you, then, doubt? Have I not just been standing half-way in eternity, and almost face to face with Him that was to judge me; and could I stand there with a lie on my lips? Ay, I am innocent as my own poor crippled child." Here he burst into an agony of weeping.

"Well, well, Adam, you must forgive me. I ought not, perhaps, to have asked you such a question—I feel that I ought not; but you know not yet the immense responsibility which I have incurred on your behalf, and in reliance on your word. Adam, once for all, I tell you that I am as thoroughly persuaded of your innocence of this awful crime, as I am of mine own; and may God himself, if it please His infinite wisdom, one day make it plain to us, even here, in this life."

Ayliffe answered, with a look and a manner eloquent with injured innocence, "Amen! yea, Amen! Amen! sir!" And then, burying his face in his hands, uttered aloud a few words of fervent prayer and praise, to which Mr Hylton reverently responded. "And now for Sarah, sir. Oh, Sally! Sally! Sally! shall we, then, meet again!" exclaimed the poor prisoner, in a passionate and frantic manner.

"Adam, try to be calmer; it is very natural that you should be excited"—

"Why, sir, *Is she dead?*" said Ayliffe, in a whisper that echoed through the soul of Mr Hylton, who was also startled by the wild despairing eye which was staring at him.

"She is not dead, Adam," replied Mr Hylton; "and I go hence to see her."

Ayliffe burst into bitter weeping, and sobbed, "Oh! that I might go with you, sir, to see her dear, pre-

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cious face, though but for one moment!"

"Adam, be thankful to God that it is with you as it is—that I have now to prepare her, not for your death, but for your preserved life."

"Oh! yes, sir! thanks be to God for His infinite mercy! I leave it all to Him! for what have I deserved at His hand!"

"What, indeed, Adam!" echoed Mr Hylton.

With infinite tenderness and judgment did he discharge the critical duty which he had undertaken. His cautious words fell upon the ear, and sunk into the fainting soul, of poor Mrs Ayliffe, like drops, as it were, of living water. What tears oozed from her closed eyes, and flowed down her wan and wasted cheeks! She knew not, so vigilant had been her faithful attendants, at the repeated instance of Mr Hylton and the doctor resident at the infirmary, the awful aspect with which had dawned upon her doomed husband that memorable Monday morning; and all that Mr Hylton dared to tell her was, that her husband's *life* was no longer in danger. It was not till Mr Hylton was riding at a brisk canter into the village, passing many old familiar faces wearing an expression of tearful congratulation at the issue of his humane exertions (the last of which, however, had not then become known); nor till he felt Mrs Hylton sobbing in his arms, and saw his little Mary crying she scarce knew why, but not with an unhappy cry,—that that pious pastor of his flock felt the full luxury of having done good, and beheld upon his humble handiwork the radiant seal of God's blessing. Oh, happy moment! in which he forgot all his past agonies and long unrequited toil, and said, with profound devoutness and self-abasement, "Not unto us, O God! not unto us, but UNTO THY name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake."

About the middle of the next day he went out on foot, some mile or two upon the road, to meet one whom he expected, and into whose well-nigh broken heart, also, he had been the honoured instrument of pouring the balm of consolation. 'Twas old Adam Ayliffe, who, as he approached, was sitting between a farmer and his wife, who had gone in their market-cart purposely to bring him home. The good woman's arm was kindly placed round the spare and feeble figure of the venerable sufferer, as her husband, on Mr Hylton's coming up, stopped the cart. The old man then tried to rise, but in vain, his knees evidently tottering under him; and with trembling hands he raised his broad hat from his head, and looked unutterable gratitude towards Mr Hylton, who himself could hardly speak, as he grasped one of Ayliffe's extended hands. His eyes were fixed tearlessly on Mr Hylton for a long time, during which they spoke volumes of thrilling feeling.

"God bless thy dear bald head, Adam!" said the farmer's wife, gently pressing upon it his hat; "do not thou catch cold; the parson, belike, may come and see thee, when we get home."

"Yes, yes, I will," said Mr Hylton, and followed them on to the cottage; which, during the preceding day, and that morning, had been got to rights and made very tidy, against the old man's return, by some dozen eager and affectionate pairs of hands; who had trimmed the little garden, cut the hedge, and cleaned the small windows till they looked clear as crystal. Ah, dear little services, how eloquent you are!—When the cart had arrived at the cottage, old Ayliffe was carefully helped down, gazing at his cottage looking so trim and tidy, with feelings not difficult to be understood, but hard to express. Within was Mrs Hylton, who had intended to come out and welcome home the poor old man; but on seeing him her heart failed her, and she continued to busy herself with the little table, on which her own hands had, shortly before, placed some small matters of refreshment. When Adam entered, leaning on Mr Hylton's arm, all who were present, and there were several, rose and received him silently, being unable, when they saw his face, to speak a word; nor could he, but shook his

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head in silence. And when one of them, on his sitting down, brought him his little grandson, he folded in his arms its pale and silent figure, and presently his tears fell fast. They relieved him; and by-and-by he was able to say, though in a very faint way, "God bless you all, good friends!" and he drank, without uttering a word, the wine which Mr Hylton had placed in his trembling hand; and, perhaps recollecting on what occasion it was that wine had last touched his lips, he looked upward with an awful expression.

In the course of the next week, poor Adam Ayliffe was removed, handcuffed, from the county gaol, together with several other prisoners, and conveyed to a vessel in a neighbouring port; and thence was duly brought to London, and placed on board a ship, to be conveyed abroad, in pursuance of the grievous conditions of his pardon. He had spoken scarcely a syllable between the time of his quitting the gaol and being lodged on shipboard, a handcuffed convict, shunned even by his guilty brethren as one stained with blood, and unjustly saved from the scaffold. He resented no petty indignity which was offered him, and there were many, inflicted by those who loathed the vile Cheat-the-gallows! His patient endurance they attributed to consciousness that he had no right to cumber the ground—to pollute, by his accursed presence, the land of the living. All this he bore in silence. His big, indignant heart seemed constantly on the point of breaking. No kind word to *him* ever fell upon his ear. He felt desolate and blighted; bearing the brand of Cain upon the brow of innocence.

For he WAS innocent!

The unfortunate Earl of Milverstoke lay, for a long while, in a most precarious state. The first words which he spoke, on regaining full consciousness, after having remained without it for nearly a fortnight, were to his daughter, who sat, pale and worn, beside him.

"Emily," said he, feebly, "let me, during the day, see Mr Hylton:" and he was obeyed.

When that reverend person seated himself, some hours afterwards, in a chair placed for him beside the prostrate peer, it was with mingled hope and apprehension; for with what feelings his lordship might recollect the closing scene of their last memorable interview, Mr Hylton knew not. He gazed at the sunken features of the Earl with deep emotion.

"Mr Hylton," said his lordship, faintly, "have you forgiven me?"

"My dear Lord," he replied gently, "I have nothing to forgive. Were you fit to bear it, I should ask you to forgive *me*"—

"Do you think that God will forgive me?" inquired the Earl, closing his eyes.

"To be sure He will, my dear Lord!" replied Mr Hylton with energy; "He will! if He be but rightly asked for forgiveness!" The Earl shook his head sadly; and his wasted fingers, white as snow, grasped Mr Hylton's hand.

"May I—still—reckon on your pious services—towards me and my family?"

"Oh, my dear Lord," replied Mr Hylton, with subdued fervour, "yes! as long as I live, and it may please God to enable me to serve you!"

"There are those here," said the Earl, speaking from his weakness, with difficulty, "who love, who reverence you: and I am one of them, but the unworthiest!" Again his fingers gently compressed those of Mr Hylton, who was much affected. "When I have a little more strength, Mr Hylton, we will speak of THAT—of which we have formerly spoken; but it will be, on my part, in a different spirit."

Mr Hylton bowed silently, with feelings of earnest respect and sympathy, and also with others of a profound and agitating character. For alas! to him had been intrusted the trying and terrible duty, undertaken only in deference to the agonising importunities of Lady Emily, of communicating to her noble parent intelligence, which had reached her accidentally, and while utterly unprepared for it; and by which not only she,

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but shortly afterwards Lady Alkmond, had been fearfully agitated, and for a while prostrated.

Among several letters which had come to the Castle, shortly after the Earl's sudden illness, was one marked "Immediate" and "Private and Confidential," and bearing outside the name of the Secretary of State. From this letter poor Lady Emily learnt the lamentable intelligence, that her brother, the late Lord Alkmond, had, when on the Continent, and shortly before his marriage, slain, in a duel, a Hungarian officer; whom, having challenged for some affront which had passed at dinner, he had run through the heart, and killed on the spot: the unfortunate officer leaving behind him, alas! a widow and several orphans, all thereby reduced to beggary. The dispute which had led to these disastrous results had been one of really a trivial nature, but magnified into importance by the young Lord's quick and imperious temper, which had also led him to dictate terms of apology so humiliating and offensive that no one could submit to them. Wherefore the two met; and presently the Hungarian fell dead, his adversary's rapier having passed clean through the heart. It was, however, an affair which had been managed with perfect propriety; with an exact observance of the rules of duelling! All had been done legitimately! Yet was it MURDER; an honourable, a right honourable, murder: but murder as clear and glaring, before the Judge of all the earth, as that by which Lord Alkmond had himself fallen. When, therefore, thus fearfully summoned away to his account, the young noble's own hand was crimsoned with the blood which he had shed: and so went he into the awful presence of the Most High, whose voice had ever upon earth been sounding tremendous in his ears,—*Where is thy brother? What hast thou done? The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground.* Unhappy man! well might his heart have been heavy, when men expected it to be lightest! Well might his countenance darken, and his soul shudder within him, under the mortal throes of a guilty conscience! From his father's splendid banqueting-table he had been driven by remorse and horror; for his companions, unconscious that they were stabbing to the heart one who was present, WOULD TALK of duelling, and of one sanguinary duel in particular, which bore a ghastly resemblance to his own. Such poor amends as might be in his power to make, he had striven to offer to the miserable family whom he had bereaved, beggared, and desolated, to vindicate an honour which had never been for one instant really questioned or compromised by his slain opponent; and, if it *had* been tarnished, could BLOOD cleanse and brighten it?

All the money which he could ordinarily obtain from the Earl, had from time to time been furnished by Lord Alkmond to the wretched family of his victim. For them it was that he had importuned his father for a sum of money sufficient to make for them an ample and permanent provision. Only the day before that on which he had quitted London, to partake of the Christmas festivities at Milverstoke, he had written an earnest letter to the person abroad, with whom he had long communicated on the subject, assuring him that within a few weeks a satisfactory final arrangement should be effected. And he had resolved to make a last strenuous effort with the Earl; but whom, nevertheless, he dared not, except as a matter of dire necessity, tell the nature of his exigency. And why dared not the son tell that to his father? And why had that father shrunk, blighted, from the mention, by Captain Lutteridge and Mr Hylton, of the conversation which had driven his son out into the solitude where he was slain? Alas! it opened to Lord Milverstoke himself a very frightful retrospect: through the vista of years his anguished, terror-stricken eye settled upon a crimsoned gloom —

—Oh, Lord Milverstoke!—and then would echo in thy ears, also, those appalling sounds,—*what hast* THOU *done?*

For THY—Honour! also, had been dyed in blood!

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CHAPTER XVII.

Though no one liked to own it, or much less speak of it, the coming struggle for Senior Wrangler was pretty generally felt in the University to be one, as it were, between patrician and plebeian; since it had been for a length of time perceived that the contest lay between a noble member of a leading college, and an obscure sizar of an obscure college, which had never before signalised itself by producing even a creditable candidate for the laurel. The aristocrat was deservedly popular: a favourite with everybody. Handsome and graceful, engaging, affable, dignified, and unaffected, there were also a certain charming modesty and pensiveness in his demeanour, which some attributed to the early and severe religious discipline which he was said to have received—a notion borne out by his exemplary conduct at college; and others referred to profound love of study. These appeared somewhat unusual characteristics of the immediate heir to one of the most ancient peerages in the realm, and its vast unencumbered estates,—to wealth which made dizzy the heads of those weak enough to contemplate the possession of it with envious longings. To its destined lord, however, it appeared unattended with these effects. He was as assiduous and systematic in his studies, as though his daily bread had depended altogether on his obtaining academical distinction. His private tutor, himself a picked man, who had gained *almost* the highest honours, gave out, from time to time, confident assurances of his noble pupil's capabilities, and inspired high hopes of honour for his college; which, though a distinguished one, had not for the preceding four years produced a senior wrangler. But my Lord and his numerous well-wishers were not, it seemed, to have it all their own way: for it had slowly grown into a rumour, during the year preceding the day of contest, that a person, of whom scarcely any one knew or had heard anything,—in fact, the aforesaid sizar,—was coming out to do battle on behalf of his long unhonoured and humble college, against the whole university. The more that the matter was inquired into, the more exciting and interesting became the anticipated contest; shadowing out in the minds of the solemn and quiet men looking on, a certain battle between Goliath of Gath, and one David. The tutor of the favourite made it his business to become acquainted, as far as practicable, with the real probabilities of the case; and the result was a very complete conviction that his pupil would have to encounter, in this champion of obscurity, a most formidable opponent, one apparently born with a genius for mathematics, and the hidden mysteries of physical science. A fellow, in the confidence of my Lord's tutor, desirous of probing the proficiency of this unknown disciple of Newton, threw himself in his way; and was pleased to declare himself puzzled with a certain question in high mathematics which had occurred to him: *i. e.* he had picked it out of a recently published foreign scientific treatise. His teeth, however, presently chattered; for his difficulty was disposed of with a masterly ease, and also with a certain scientific elegance, which, under the circumstances, were most unsatisfactory and alarming to him whose genuine doubts had been solved. Who was this person? No one knew anything

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of him except his name, "Southern," and that of his college; that he led a secluded life; appeared very poor; was studious, yet by no means devoted exclusively to mathematics, having such superior classical acquirements as were unusual in the case of candidates for mathematical honours. In short, whoever he might be, he seemed likely to prove himself a first-rate man, and his college began to regard him with great interest; and its members, as the moment of contest approached, went about talking with a mighty easy air about the result. This led to increased energy and activity of operation among a certain large class of ardent university men, well versed in the pecuniary calculation of chances, and resolute in maintaining, even at considerable risk, any opinion which they might have espoused on a given subject; which in the present case was, which of these two will come out senior wrangler? The higher class of men pretty generally backed the plebeian; the lower, the patrician: that is to say, the plebeians professed, and probably sincerely felt, a deep interest in my Lord's success; while the patricians, and those of plebeian rank who were of natural nobility, felt a generous interest on behalf of his lordship's obscure and unbefriended competitor. And it must be recorded to his honour, that no man in the university could surpass, in genuine and exalted feeling, that which animated the young aristocrat towards his untitled, and so far, therefore, ignoble rival. As the day of battle drew nigh, these two met, not quite undesignedly on my Lord's part; who very shortly established himself deservedly in the high estimation of his opponent. Each talked freely on his respective prospects, each admired the other's modesty, and entertained qualms, or sharp twinges of apprehension, as to the result of the contest. Several times in the dusk of the evening they were seen walking together; and a striking contrast was there in the outward appearance of those on whose movements and prospects were now concentrated the curiosity and interest of the whole university. One was tall, slender, erect, graceful; the other short, lame, and a little distorted in figure. In a word, though no person in the university knew it, one was son to the man who, nearly twenty years before, had been condemned to the gallows, on the false charge of having murdered the father of the other!—for who else should these two be, but the Lord Viscount Alkmond and Adam Ayliffe! Strange, very strange was it, yet true; and while the two combatants, Lord Alkmond and Mr Southern, are in honourable and exceedingly eager strife together, for the mastery,—which of them shall be declared THE FIRST MAN OF THE UNIVERSITY,—let us take a rapid retrospect of the interval of nearly twenty years which has elapsed since those two young men—now walking together arm-in-arm, in amicable collegiate equality, each respecting, and fearing, the talents and acquirements of the other—were lying respectively in castle and cottage at Milverstoke,—oh, under what different circumstances!

—Twenty years! Prodigious interval in the life of man! How blessed is he who can turn round to contemplate it with reverent composure and thankfulness; enjoying the humble and well-founded hope that he has become a wiser, a better, and a happier, albeit a somewhat sadder, man, than when those twenty years began! Though he has not been *cut down*, has he, during all that momentous period, been merely *cumbering the ground*, remaining now barren and blighted? or diligently self-cultivated and nourished, so as to thrive, and bloom, in immortality?

Mr Hylton, the Earl of Milverstoke, and old Adam Ayliffe, still were living; as also were some others who have appeared in the former part of this history; and how have they fared? what have they done? what have they become during those twenty years.

Mr Hylton's hair is white as snow, but his eye is bright, his face beams with a benignity which is endearing and elevating to the heart of the beholder. Still he lives at Milverstoke

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parsonage; and his good wife, also stricken in years, is still by his side, his cheerful, pious, and affectionate helpmate; his daughter, sole surviving child, has been spared to them, and has become a woman—a charming woman. But how many of his parishioners has Mr Hylton during these twenty years consigned to the tomb, reading over their remains, in solemn hopefulness, that sublime service which he trusts that some pious soul will by-and-by read over *his* remains, when he also shall have become a tenant of the churchyard, sleeping beside those whom he has buried, his children—and their mother!

Upwards of a month elapsed from the time of Mr Hylton's first visit to the Earl of Milverstoke after his illness, before Mr Hylton deemed it prudent to communicate to him the afflicting intelligence concerning his late son which has been lately laid before the reader. There had been reasons rendering it highly expedient that no time should be needlessly lost in making the revelation in question, in order to protect the Earl from harassing importunities on behalf of the widow and orphans of the officer who had been killed by Lord Alkmond, and whose case had been repeatedly and urgently pressed on the Secretary of State, through the intervention of the British and foreign ambassadors. In spite of all the discretion and skill exercised by Mr Hylton in making the agitating communication, it almost prostrated the Earl, both in mind and body. For upwards of half a year he lay at death's door, and for several weeks was bereft of reason. During those benighted intervals, he not only raved wildly about his son, and the fearful transaction in which he had been engaged, but let fall expressions of dismal import, explicable only by a reference to some event of a similar nature in his own early life! He grievously reproached himself for not having instilled into his son, from earliest youth, an abhorrence of duelling: for not having affectionately and vigilantly trained and disciplined his hasty and imperious temper; and, above all, uttered lamentable accusations against himself for his hard-heartedness in not having yielded to his son's entreaties to be supplied with money (he had asked a sum of five thousand pounds), and encouraged him to disclose that which so evidently oppressed his mind. And even after the Earl had recovered the use of his reason, he would talk in the same strain to Mr Hylton; and began to express a suspicion lest the death of Lord Alkmond should, in some mysterious and horrid way unknown, have had a connection with his fatal duel. That idea had presented itself, indeed, to Mr Hylton's mind. He thought it by no means impossible that some friend or member of the family of Lord Alkmond's victim had come over to this country, impelled by a deadly spirit of revenge, tracked out Lord Alkmond's path, patiently waited on his movements, and seized the first fitting opportunity to destroy him. Might not the assassin or assassins be the persons who had been seen by the sailor Harrup, from the sea, running along the shore, in a direction from the woods?

But the Earl of Milverstoke soon abandoned such ideas as chimerical, and recurred to his original opinion that the murderer had been none other than Ayliffe, whose rescue from the gallows was a subject on which the Earl never touched with Mr Hylton; retaining his stern and sincere conviction and belief that, by Ayliffe's escape, justice had been defeated. But what a vast change in his opinions, and in the whole temper of his soul, had been effected by the dreadful discovery of his son's sanguinary duel! Lord Milverstoke's angry rebellious feelings were quelled, and awed into a submissive recognition of God's moral government of the world; and he was terrified by the glimpses which he had obtained of His retributive justice. Declarations of Scripture, which had never before attracted his attention, now gleamed before his eyes with a new aspect, and appeared invested with a tremendous significance. *Verily He is a God that judgeth in the*

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earth! Vengeance belongeth unto me; I will recompense, saith the Lord! It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God! How amazing—how appalling—appeared now the indifference with which he had ever, till then, read and heard language such as this! *Now*, it smote and shook his very soul within him. He dared hardly think of the startling assurance that *the sins of the father might be visited upon the children—yea, even to the third and fourth generation!* What ghastly light was thus reflected upon the death of his son! How impious seemed now the father's persevering accusation against the Most High, of hard and unreasonable dealing with his creatures! When his thoughts wore this terrifying complexion, he would abandon—but, alas! only for a moment—his vindictive and implacable feelings towards Ayliffe, and cease to murmur at the dispensation of Providence, by which his life had been saved. "Even were he guilty," an awful voice within sometimes asked the Earl of Milverstoke, "is it for THEE to complain that the vengeance of Heaven tarrieth?" and for a while he would be speechless.

Milverstoke became intolerable to the Earl; whose gloomy, unquiet, and still but half-subdued spirit, dreaded solitude equally with society. How could he walk, as theretofore, in woods, which now seemed ever shrouded beneath an ensanguined haze! How appalling the silence ever reigning within the magnificent apartments of his Castle—of that stately structure where had lain so recently the bleeding remains of his son—for which it had served but as a vast and dismal mausoleum! As soon, therefore, as his shattered condition would admit of his doing so, he removed, with his family, to another of his residences in a distant part of England, not haunted with such maddening associations as that which he had quitted, and, as he purposed, for ever. There was one person whom he was deeply affected in taking leave of, and that was Mr Hylton, whose character, having always respected, he now regarded with reverence. In him the Earl saw lofty purpose, in him inflexible rectitude; purity unsullied; a meekness which could never be ruffled or disturbed; a simplicity, strength, and dignity of character, the foundations of which were laid in profound Christian humility and faith. A thousand softening and self-reproaching recollections cherished the Earl of this good man's patient gentleness under galling insult, such as his lordship now felt would have infuriated most, if not all others whom he had ever known in life. Mr Hylton had, however, borne it in silence, yet without, on the one hand, surrendering an iota of his self-respect or independence; or, on the other, exhibiting the faintest approach to resentment. With what affectionate and persevering faithfulness, with what unwavering firmness, with what unbaffled skilfulness, had this, his spiritual physician, probed the unsoundness of his spirit, and then applied to it the cleansing and healing influences of religion! And even yet how much remained to be done before the Earl could dare to look back without blighting terror, or contemplate the future with any degree of calmness and hope!—Alas, not once from those rigid lips had fallen a word of forgiveness towards the supposed slayer of his peace! The language of those lips was, and ever had been, truth and sincerity. Such, also, were the regulating principles of his conduct; yet without *the one missing element*, all was the very blackness of darkness, and hopeless, eternal exclusion from heaven. This Mr Hylton felt, and fearfully felt; and the more, because to such absolute and intimate certainty had not yet attained he whom it so awfully concerned. All these anxieties crowded into his mind, and many of them into that of the Earl, as his white attenuated hand finally grasped that of Mr Hylton, before the equipage rolled away which contained Lord Milverstoke, his beautiful but saddened daughter, and the lovely widowed mother of the little unconscious heir to all his earthly wealth, greatness, honour, and ancient lineage. The little lips *of the living Lord Aldmond!* Mr Hylton solemnly pressed

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with his own, in the Earl's presence, and, with a voice and look pregnant with mysterious significance and warning, said to him, "REMEMBER!" His lordship leaned back in silence in his carriage, and a few moments afterwards had commenced his long journey. Both his lovely companions wept much; and as for Lady Emily, she had thrown her arms round Mr and Mrs Hylton, and kissed them again and again with all a daughter's fondness; and into Mr Hylton's ear she softly whispered the word which he afterwards uttered to her noble father, "REMEMBER!" By that word he had signified, "Forget not our many discoursings together, nor that glorious and awful Volume which is now beginning to shine before your hitherto unseeing eyes in letters of living light. Abhor yourself! Look within, and see in your heart a nest of serpents! Pray that they die, and disappear!—that pride and revenge may perish! Forgive, or ask not to be forgiven, lest you offend the awful Majesty of Heaven, and draw down perdition upon your soul! Adore the Unsearchable, the Just, the Merciful; but only through Him whom He hath sent! Tremble as you look on that little one, upon whom all your earthly hopes are fixed — whom you have chosen to make the pride and mainstay of your house! Let him be to you, not a vain idol, but a precious memento of your duty and your allegiance to Heaven, in whose anger this *desire of your eyes* may instantly wither and vanish. Look upon him, and tremblingly remember the doings of his progenitors!" The Lady Emily's "Remember" said gentler things! "On me rest the succour of those who are objects, alas! of my father's seemingly implacable animosity. But remember the reverence which is due to him from me, as a most loving daughter!"

So departed the lordly occupants of Milverstoke Castle. Lady Emily's injunctions related to the father, wife, and son of the banished Ayliffe, of whose innocence she entertained, in confident and not unjustifiable reliance on Mr Hylton, a firm conviction. Her father's unbounded liberality gave her ample opportunity for carrying her generous purposes into effect, unknown to him, through the agency of Mr Hylton. She settled on old Ayliffe a small weekly allowance, sufficient for his modest wants, without the necessity of exertions for which his years and his sufferings had incapacitated him. She contrived also, through Mr Hylton, to find means of sending Mrs Ayliffe, on her passionate entreaty, to follow her husband to the plantations, about a year after his ignominious banishment; that being the earliest moment that her shattered health would permit. And as for the wretched little Adam, Lady Emily had declared that he should become her child —that she would be wholly answerable for his support. 'Twas agony to the mother to part with her child—but the representations of Mr Hylton prevailed: even had there not existed difficulties almost insurmountable in the way of her child's accompanying her abroad, instead of remaining at home to receive the kind support and superintendence of Mr Hylton. Shortly before Mrs Ayliffe's departure to rejoin her unfortunate husband, Mr Hylton arranged that the woman to whom the care of her infant had been committed on the arrest of his father, should take up her abode with her little charge at the cottage of old Ayliffe; and a touching and pleasant sight it was to behold the venerable sorrow-stricken grandfather betimes familiarising the child with the Book to which alone, throughout life, he had himself clung for consolation and succour. 'Twas he who taught the child his letters, being as patient a teacher as the learner was apt and docile. It seemed, indeed, as if Providence had compensated that poor little being's physical deficiencies by intellectual endowments of a superior order. From a very early age, his pale placid features evinced decided thoughtfulness. It was not timidity that characterised his demeanour and deportment, but a contemplative temperament, conjoined with possibly a painful sense, increasing with his

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years, of physical inferiority—a combination of conditions which soon attracted the notice of an observer so acute and affectionately watchful as Mr Hylton. He thought that the child exhibited precocity; but judiciously acted as though it had not. The death of his attentive nurse, when he was about four years old, enabled Mr Hylton, with the consent of old Ayliffe—wrung from him, however, with infinite reluctance—to carry into effect a scheme which had occurred to him, namely, the removal of the child to a distance from Milverstoke, and under another name, in order to avoid the fatal prejudice attached to the blighted name which he bore—that of a convicted murderer—who, as such, was generally believed to have unjustly escaped the gallows through the caprice or timidity of the King. Mr Hylton's indefatigable zeal overcame several difficulties in his way, apparently trivial, but practically not a little embarrassing; and he ultimately succeeded, with the assistance of a clerical relative living in a village on the furthest outskirts of an adjoining county, in placing the child, under the name of Southern, in the house, and under the care, of a village schoolmaster—a person of much higher qualifications than were requisite for the humble sphere which he then occupied, and to which he had been reduced by misfortune. In a much shorter time than Mr Hylton could have anticipated, he was gratified by receiving more and more decisive, and indeed surprising, reports of the child's capacity and progress; who presently evinced, over and above his general talents, such a mathematical faculty, as quickly placed him beyond the reach of his master, and commended him to the special notice of the clergyman whom Mr Hylton had interested in his behalf, and who, like Mr Hylton, had taken high honours at Cambridge. Mr Hylton went over to see his charge regularly once a month, and personally ascertained how well-founded were the reports which he had received of the child's advancement. The two parsons often laid their good heads together on the subject; and at length Mr Hylton, relying on the secret and most efficient patronage of Lady Emily, resolved to give the child a splendid start, as he called it, and put him into a position which would enable him to make the best of his rare talents. In short, Mr Hylton resolved, but with a sort of inward spasm when he reflected on the boldness of the enterprise, to give him the advantage of a university education. With Lady Emily's full concurrence, young Southern, as soon as he was deemed by Mr Hylton duly qualified, was established as a sizar at a quiet and obscure college at Cambridge, with a few affectionate cautions from Mr Hylton as to the course of conduct to be pursued there. Without distinctly intimating why, he told Southern to regard himself as an orphan, whose continuance at the university depended solely on the successful use which he might make of such rare advantages as had been providentially conferred upon him. Good Mr Hylton's heart yearned towards the modest youth in saying all this, which he felt to be indeed needless; and, when looking at his pale countenance, the lineaments of which betokened humility and goodness, while his dark eyes beamed with unerring indications of intellect and genius, Mr Hylton's thoughts reverted to a memorable scene of that youth's infancy, when he lay uneasy, and yet unconscious of his position, in the lap of an innocent, manacled, fettered, and nearly maddened father, about to swing from the gibbet as a foul and cowardly murderer!

"Well, my good lad," said Mr Hylton, his voice a little tremulous, on first leaving him in his tiny room "Give me thy hand: God's good Providence hath brought thee hither, and may His smile be upon thee! Ay, lad," Mr Hylton added, more firmly grasping his hand, "the smile of Him *from whom cometh every good and perfect gift!* God bless thee, my lad! One day thou wilt perhaps see a very angel upon this earth, whose finger hath pointed thy way hither: but of this inquire and speak never a word

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to any one, as thou lovest me, and wouldst remain here!"

Southern listened to all this with a beating heart, full of tenderness, gratitude, fear, hope, and wonder,—but withal, a sustaining sense of capacity and power: alone, as he was among so many—the great, the wealthy, the proud,—all of whom, whatever their disposition, would, had they known who he was, have spurned him, or shrunk from him, as one in whose veins ran the black and corrupted blood of hereditary crime! Poor youth! Happy, happy, was thy ignorance; and humane were the object and purpose of those who placed thee in it!

Another there was, however, of nearly the same age as Southern—but how differently circumstanced!—with what different feelings regarded by those who surrounded him!—whose hearts he gladdened by displaying true nobility of disposition, as he grew up, and unequivocally superior intellectual endowments. This was the grandson of the Earl of Milverstoke, the youthful Viscount Alkmond. Living, as he had, in the presence of those who regarded him, so to speak, as the *very apple of their eye*, watching his every movement with lynx-like vigilance and unutterable love, yet had he breathed the pure and invigorating air of moral and religious discipline. He was regarded by those who surrounded him as indeed a precious trust from Heaven, an earnest and pledge of forgiveness and happiness here and hereafter! His ripening intellect was trained and cultivated by the most consummate skill which could be pressed into the responsible service. His temper was calm, mild, self-denying; and so unaffected and humble, that he seemed really scarcely aware of the resplendent position which he occupied, and was apparently destined to grace and dignify. Oh, with what thrilling emotions of solicitous fondness, of well-warranted exaltation, would his widowed mother gaze on his noble features, and the winning but pensive smile which played over them! Who but she could tell the feelings with which she often detected in them the highest expression that she had ever seen in those of his unhappy departed father! Who could sound the awful depth of those reflections into which the Earl of Milverstoke would sink, when he regarded that son of a murdered father—and *he* the son of a father—that grandson of one who—the Earl would tremble when thoughts like these presented themselves—thoughts which flung him prostrate before the awful footstool of Mercy—and even there would he lie quaking with terror, yet—God be thanked!—*not in despair*.

Every year were Mr and Mrs Hylton visitors at the picturesque and splendid residence to which the Earl had betaken himself on quitting Milverstoke. The presence of that minister of God served at once to humble and exalt those to whom he came, radiant with the pure influences of piety and virtue, which, in his meek presence, shone, as it were, before their very eyes. And, when absent, still year after year came from him many missives of earnest and faithful teaching: soul-subduing, soul-elevating; entering into his inner man, and seeking to expel all that could defile the temple of the living God. And he had, indeed, at length sapped the foundations of PRIDE; the pillar which had stood upon it, in black and hideous strength and height, had fallen, and lay crushed in visible fragments around. Yet was there another, apparently adamantine and inaccessible: alas! still continued the Earl utterly UNFORGIVING! And the subtle fiend, who ever hovered around so coveted a victim, to him invisible, but visible to the eyes of the minister of Christ, supplied reasons which seemed unanswerable, for perseverance in blind and deadly infatuation. In vain presented Mr Hylton to the shuddering averted eye of the Earl, moving pictures of the deserted and desolate *father* of the heart-broken exile; of blameless life, of exalted piety, of unswerving faith, of hearty forgiveness of injury: the more vivid the colouring, the nearer came the awe-inspiring figure—the

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hastier and angrier was the retreat of the inexorable Earl. And that poor exile himself—him also fearlessly presented Mr Hylton to the Earl, as an image of resignation and Christian forgiveness: but all in vain—the Earl recoiled from the approach, with mingled disgust and horror. And Mr Hylton's last weapon, which with dauntless aim he drove home—*What if all this time he be innocent as your lordship's self!*—even that, too, failed of its purpose. His steadfast perseverance, year after year, did not, however, exasperate the Earl, who loved and reverenced one whom he might well style—incomparable. The finest living in his gift (and he had several) he earnestly and affectionately pressed upon Mr Hylton—but in vain.

"No, my dear Lord," said he, "give it to a younger, a stronger, a better man. *Here* pitched I my tent long ago; and here will I remain and take my rest, with those whom I love, whom one by one I have followed lovingly to the dust—my people!—my flock!—my children! Here are they all! Here sweetly sleep they; and by-and-by, in God's good time, I hope to slumber beside them, till we all rise together again from the dust!"

When the Earl got the letter which contained these moving expressions, he took it out with him, and read it often, as he walked in solitude for many hours. "This man's foot," said he, "I could see placed upon my paltry coronet of dust; for on HIS brow wears he one that gleams with heavenly brightness!"

Hopeless indeed appeared Mr Hylton's efforts: but the stake which he played for was one of tremendous magnitude; and he dared not cease his exertions, he dared not despair. It was a contest that was sublime; one upon which angels looked down, ay, into which they entered unseen; one in which victory would be celebrated in eternity.

Many brilliant suitors sought the hand of Lady Alkmond, but in vain: her heart could feel no second love, but was either buried in the untimely grave of her husband, or absorbed in the treasure which survived him. She was still lovely—pensive in her loveliness—and meet companion to the sorrow-stricken father of him whose loss she mourned; and she was in time his only companion: for Lady Emily, peerless in beauty, ay, and in purity and goodness, on coming forth from her stately privacy into the world, found herself surrounded by those who paid an eager and enthusiastic homage to her charms; and it was not long before the contest ended; the fortress surrendered at discretion; and fair Lady Emily became the Duchess of Waverdale—her lord, her slave: she, his vowed servant, his sweet and absolute mistress!—and the link which bound them together passed through the hallowing hands of Mr Hylton.

Little difficulty felt the beautiful Duchess in obtaining the Duke's sanction to her secret arrangement with Mr Hylton, for the support of young Southern, both at school and at college; but the alarmed perplexity into which both her Grace and Mr Hylton fell, on hearing of the destination of the young Lord Alkmond to Cambridge, instead of Oxford, where the Earl of Milverstoke had been educated, may be easily imagined. Mr Hylton, good soul, took the earliest opportunity which he could find, of sounding to the Earl the praises of Oxford; which he did with such remarkable energy and pertinacity, as not a little surprised his lordship; and once or twice even drew from him, what was rarely seen on his features, a smile, as he good-naturedly reproached Mr Hylton with ingratitude and undutifulness towards his *Alma Mater*.

The Earl heartily, and very justly, loved Oxford, where he himself had contended successfully for honours; but the last and greatest resident tutor of Lord Alkmond happened to be a Cambridge man; and had made such stimulating representations concerning his lordship's mathematical talents and acquirements, and the probability which there was of their conducting him to the highest point of academical distinction, that the Earl resolved on having his grandson entered at Cam-

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bridge. And to Cambridge, therefore, he went: little dreaming, the while, of the tremulous anxiety which his going thither occasioned.

Mr Hylton and the Duchess had some anxious correspondence on the question of intrusting at once, in confidence to Lord Alkmond, the secret by which they were themselves so disquieted. They finally determined, however, not to do so; and perhaps wisely. And on another cognate matter were they also agreed—to keep Mr Southern in the dark as to the position which he occupied with reference to the young Lord Alkmond; with whom, indeed, a nobleman, and member of the leading college in the university, possibly he, an obscure sizar of an obscure college, might never happen to come into personal contact.

Sixteen years after the cruel death of Lord Alkmond, the persevering efforts of Mr Hylton to overcome the unrelenting and bitterly unchristian feelings of the Earl of Milverstoke towards the supposed murderer of his son, were at length crowned with success, to Mr Hylton's unspeakable joy and satisfaction. But it was only because his pious efforts had been aided by the afflicting hand which it had pleased God to lay upon the Earl, who was brought very nearly to the door of death, and then saw around him the uncompromising minister of religion, his own daughter, and his widowed daughter-in-law — all of whom, with gentle, and at length irresistible persuasion and prayer, urged him to utter (which uttering, they knew he would feel) the word which would open to him that door of mercy, which otherwise must remain for ever —yes, FOR EVER closed.

"Come forth from that wretched hard-heartedness of thine," said Mr Hylton, with solemn energy, "and thankfully and reverently echo the awful language of the Saviour of mankind, in his agony on the cross, 'FATHER, FORGIVE THEM!' Oh, how art thou hereafter to stand before Him, asking for mercy, whose example thou didst on earth disregard, and disregarding, despise? Awake! awake from thy horrible and deadly trance! *Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light!*"

"Oh, my brother! my teacher!" said the Earl, devoutly, and with a holy transport, "the scales are falling from mine eyes! Pray for me!—pray for me! I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes!"

And they did pray for him, and with him, and the offended majesty of God was appeased, through an ever-living Intercessor! From his foot there fell the last of the fetters which had bound him in the dungeon of the Prince of Darkness.

"I humbly and fearfully FORGIVE!" he said—and the light of Heaven fell that moment upon his benighted soul, scaring away for ever the fiends of darkness! A sudden peace pervaded his long-troubled breast.

"O ever-merciful God! it is sufficient! Keep Thou thy servant in this spirit, and in this faith!" solemnly faltered Mr Hylton, kneeling at his bedside, where also knelt the weeping figures of the Duchess and Lady Alkmond.

Yes, the grace had been given,—the long, fervent, effectual prayer of a righteous man had availed much: —and oh, stupendous, inconceivable change! due only to heavenly potency! a whole nature had been transformed—a great spirit, long downward sinking, sprung like lightning out of the awful abyss of condemnation and despair—and stood trembling, but firm, upon the Rock of Ages, with humble uplifted eye, on which streamed light and glory from the Sun of Righteousness.

"Oh why," thought afterwards the Earl, "hath this been so long delayed? Why have I passed thus far through this earth, a blasted wilderness, which might have bloomed and blossomed as the rose—a very paradise around me!"

That sickness was not unto death, but had been otherwise ordered by the

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Supreme Disposer of events; and not long after this blessed change had come over the Earl of Milverstoke, whose very countenance betokened it, there happened an event so utterly unlooked for and signal, as to demand a faithful record of it.

For the benefit of the sea air, Lord Milverstoke, after seventeen years' absence from the scene, to his lordship dismal enough, of those events which have formed the subject of this history, returned to Milverstoke Castle —oh, what an altered man! It might almost be said to have been in a stern spirit of martyrdom that he came back to a spot so surrounded with associations of grief and horror. But he resolved to dare all, to bear all, and in a spirit of voluntary self-denying humiliation. And, indeed, his soul shuddered within him as he passed through the village and drove along the road lying *in that horrible wood* — to his long-deserted Castle, soon standing before him with an aspect of gloomy, nay, terrible magnificence.

"Courage!" said Mr Hylton, who, at his request, was waiting to receive him as he alighted—the Earl grasping his proffered hand with an almost convulsive energy, and involuntarily closing his eyes. "You are entering this great and ancient house," whispered his venerable chaplain, "possibly more blessed by Heaven than ever entered any of your ancestors!"

"Oh, Mr Hylton!" faltered the Earl, "it may be, it may be!"—and he took off his hat with an air of profound reverence, and for a moment stood still in the hall through which he was passing.

His hair had become white as snow; his noble features wore an expression of sorrowful dignity; but their once haughty frowning sternness was gone for ever, having vanished with the temper and feelings in which it had originated. His tall, commanding figure, once erect as an arrow, now was bent beneath the burden of age and grief, and his gait and step were feeble. But what gentleness in his eyes, what gentleness in the tones of his voice, appeared to those now around him, who remembered the proud Earl of Milverstoke of a former day! And there was his daughter, still blooming with beauty, and the Duke, her husband, and her children —all there to welcome him!—and his daughter-in-law and his grandson — all of whom he embraced, but especially the last, with a tenderness which could find no utterance.

That evening, before the assembled family and household, Mr Hylton resumed his functions as the Earl's chaplain, in the presence of a grave auditory, collected in that chamber, the library, which had formerly witnessed scenes so stormy and so different. Mr Hylton read the ninetieth Psalm, and the prayers, with soul-subduing solemnity; for his spirit was indeed moved within him, by the mighty contrast which he beheld between NOW and THEN; by the humble but lively hope which he felt, that old things had passed away, and all things had become new!

CHAPTER XVIII.

"WHY, what can this be, Mary?" said Mr Hylton, as Mrs Hylton placed in his hands, on his return one day from a walk in the village, after paying a visit to old Ayliffe — who still occupied his own cottage, a grateful pensioner on the bounty, conveyed through Mr Hylton, of the Lady Emily

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of a former day, the brilliant and celebrated Duchess of the present; who, with beauty in nowise faded, but only perfectly matured, retained all her characteristic simplicity and loveliness of character. "What can his Majesty have thought it worth his while to send, in his royal pleasure, to the Vicar of Milverstoke?" He alluded to the words "On His Majesty's service," standing on a packet of much greater than the usual dimensions; while in the corner was the signature "Mordaunt,"—that of the Secretary of State, Lord Mordaunt, the third successor to Lord Farnborough, in whose time he had communicated, in the character of Mr Under Secretary Wylmington, with Mr Hylton. The letter contained a large enclosure, to which a note from the Under Secretary called Mr Hylton's attention; such enclosure being a copy of a communication which had just been received from the gentleman whose name it bore.

"My Lord,

"I lose no time in informing your lordship of a somewhat remarkable fact which has just been communicated to me, officially, by the chaplain of the prison here. This morning, a person named Isaac Hart, otherwise Jonas Hundle, was executed, pursuant to the statute 18 Geo. II., c. 27, for stealing a piece of cotton goods, value ten shillings, from a bleaching-field in this county. There was every reason to believe that this was a second offence. Yesterday evening the prisoner, being much troubled in his mind, desired to see the chaplain, to whom, I rejoice to say, he heartily acknowledged the justice of the sentence under which he was going to suffer. And he then went on to speak to the following effect (the words I copy from those which the reverend chaplain took down from the prisoner's lips, and which afterwards he signed himself, by affixing thereto his mark, in the presence of the chaplain aforesaid, and the Governor of the gaol), that is to say,—

"'I, who am to die in the morning, most justly for my many sins, am not Isaac Hart, but Jonas Hundle, formerly living far away from this. And it was I that did kill and murder my Lord Milverstoke's son, for which one Ayliffe was taken, and condemned to die, but is now transported, and possibly dead. I did it with Giles Armstrong, my brother-in-law, never thinking to kill the Lord's son, whom we knew not, nor knowing, would have harmed, having no cause, that I knew of, for so doing; nor knowing to this day how he came ever into the wood that night, so as to be killed. I and Armstrong (who hath died five years ago) did determine to kill Master Godbolt, the head-keeper, for divers ills that he had done us, having shot Giles's brother, and transported another; wherefore we purposed to kill him, and I did with mine own hand strike him, as I thought, having heard that he was to be that night in the wood alone. I and Armstrong were together, but the young Lord came up to me before him, and I, thinking him, in the dark, to be Godbolt, and he walking quick, did strike him (for which God forgive me) with the coulter of a plough which Giles did take that evening from Farmer Hopkins's plough; and I did, for fear's sake, when I had struck Godbolt (as I thought it was), and lest I should be found out, thrust the coulter into a hole in a hollow tree hard by, where now, please God, it may be found, if yon tree do yet stand in that wood. And we both did get off as best we might, hearing steps, and Giles did drop over the cliff where lowest, but I ran round, and we two did go along by the sea till we got to Gaffer Strong's house, and so home by the road, no one seeing us that we knew of. And this is the very truth thereof, and I did hear Adam Ayliffe hereof tried, being present in Court during that time, but fearing to speak lest I should have to die; but I heard him not sentenced, for my heart did fail me; and hoping he may be now alive, may God have mercy on my sinful soul, which is justly to leave this

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world to-morrow morning, having done many other wicked things, but none so great as this that I now tell, and that for which I am to die to-morrow, which did to me seem hard, till I bethought me of the great wickedness of robbing people that were forced to have their goods put out in open air for to bleach, and this murder which I did on the young Lord, that another was to suffer for, but mercifully did not; all which is true, as I die to-morrow, and hope to be saved hereafter, knowing nothing can save me here from the consequences of my evil and most horrid life. God bless all Christian people, and forgive me, dying penitent. Amen.

"'JONAS [×] HUNDLE, *his mark.*
"'*Witnesses.* GREGORY DURDEN, *Chaplain.*
ABRAHAM HIGSON, *Governor.*'

"Just before the prisoner had his irons struck off, he was asked by the aforesaid Governor and Chaplain, whether all that he had over-night said was true, having first had read over to him the above, word for word; when he said it was true as the gospel: and again Mr Durden did ask him just before he suffered, and he did most solemnly declare to the truth thereof, and so he died. And, respectfully begging forgiveness for thus troubling your lordship, yet knowing your lordship's desire to help the cause of justice, I have thought fit, on great consideration, to send off this forthwith to your lordship, being, my Lord,

"Your lordship's most obedient, humble servant,
"HUMPHREY HARRIS,
"*Clerk of the peace.*"

"My Lord Mordaunt," said Mr Hylton's correspondent, "was sure that Mr Hylton would give his best attention to the enclosed document; not merely as a magistrate for the county, and a gentleman anxious for the due administration of justice, but also as one who formerly had taken great personal interest in the case of Adam Ayliffe above mentioned, as Lord Mordaunt well remembered; who relied on Mr Hylton's taking steps, without delay, to confirm or contradict, as far as might be practicable, the extraordinary statements of the deceased convict Hart *alias* Hundle, in order that, if Adam Ayliffe were yet living, justice should without delay be done in the matter, as far as yet might be."

"Oh, Mary, Mary!" said Mr Hylton, after he had somewhat recovered from the astonishment into which this letter had thrown him, "that hath now happened which I ever felt and knew within myself would happen, before I died!"

"Yes, my dear, 'tis indeed strange and most wonderful, if it be true; but stir not herein before you have found the coulter in the tree spoken of; and also, as Hopkins is alive, learnt from that good soul whether he did lose any coulter at that time, that he now can remember."

"That is all reasonable enough, and true; but the matter is already absolutely determined. I have that within me, Mary, which tells me that so it is, as I have ever felt that so it would prove to be; but what you say shall be done."

Good Mr Hylton could no longer mount his horse, and ride about, as twenty years before he used to do, but was somewhat feeble, and had gotten a gig to carry him easily and quietly about, as he might require. And in this gig he had soon placed himself, with his old gardener; and drove off to his nearest brother magistrate, and then to the clerk to the justices, a most shrewd and practised attorney. To all of them he read the marvellous letter which had brought him to them; and then they agreed to accompany him, at a given hour that afternoon, to Milverstoke wood, and search for the instrument of murder alleged to be there lying hid But Mr Hylton also determined, for the sake of more absolute security of evidence, to have with them still other witnesses of what might be dis-

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covered. Wherefore it happened, that about three o'clock that afternoon a party of at least eight people met together in Milverstoke wood, several of whom were well acquainted with the old hollow tree spoken of in the confession of Hart *alias* Hundle; and to be sure, when they had come up to the tree, there was a hole in the trunk some four feet above the ground, and quite capable of receiving what was alleged to have been thrust into it. The head-bailiff, one of the party, put his hand into the hole amidst excited silence, but felt nothing. "The hole," said he, "seems deep—the tree cannot stand many more high winds, so hollow as it is; but I will soon mend this matter of the depth." With this he sent off his man, who was present, to the woodman's house, not far off; and before long the two returned, with an axe, which they plied heartily, and soon slit down nearly three feet of the half-rotten trunk, when out sprung a large snake (which had doubtless crept in through a hole at the foot of the trunk), startling everybody away, and getting out of sight before it could be killed. Before those who had been thus stirred had quite recovered themselves, Mr Hylton, too much absorbed with the object of his errand to take much notice of what had just happened, put his own hand into the hole (careless at the moment of the possibility that other snakes were there), and, sure enough! amidst expressions of wonder, and even awe, from all present, drew forth the coulter of a plough! Mr Hylton, holding in his hands the dismal memorial of the black transaction which has been commemorated in this history, stood greatly moved before his companions. At length, "My friends," said he, solemnly, "this seems to be the doing of Almighty God; let us acknowledge it with awe and thankfulness!" As he said this, he uncovered his venerable head, his example being followed by all present: and for some moments a dead silence prevailed, during which thoughts passed through the mind of each, not to be forgotten, nor easily to be expressed. They then closely examined the rusty iron, but could discover nothing upon it that would warrant the belief, after so great a lapse of time, that the instrument bore any marks of the bloody use to which it had been applied. Mr Hylton himself took possession of it, covering it up in a cloth, which he had provided against the occasion; and his next object was to see old Hopkins, whose farm, now managed by his son-in-law, was not far off, and lay in Mr Hylton's way home. He and his brother magistrate went into the farm-house, where sat the old man smoking in the chimney corner, cheerful and intelligent, and able to hear everything that was said to him. Mr Hylton, having quietly led the conversation to the time of the great murder, which, with all its incidents, seemed quite fresh in the old man's mind, asked him whether he had ever, about that time, chanced to miss a coulter from a plough of his.

"Ay, ay," said he, rubbing his forehead for a few moments, "I do bethink me I did, and somewhere, too, about that time; nay, now I do remember that I did truly lose one, and thought that one of those Armstrongs must have taken it: a sad family they were, but I never did see or hear more of the matter."

"Should you know that coulter, were you to see it now, as matter of curiosity?" said Mr Hylton.

"What! now? That coulter?—No, no: not after all these years, hardly," replied the old man, smiling. "I got another coulter when t'other was wanting, and thought no more on't; but I've often thought that Giles did me that trick; he were a bad one, I always did believe!"

"Did you ever know one Hundle?"

"What — Jonas Hundle? the lad that choused poor Adam Ayliffe about the hare? Ay!—A sorry knave was he, I ever did think — he and Giles were always, as I may say, together, and never doing good. Glad was I to get rid of 'em—and I don't know

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what came of 'em, nor ever cared, not I!"

"Well, I can tell thee; Jonas was hanged, some two hundred miles off, last week."

"Hanged! And only last week? He hath had a long hide-and-seek with Satan (saving your reverence)—but what might he go for, at the last?"

"He robbed a bleeching-ground."

"Why, what's that?" said the farmer, scratching his head. "We've no such things in these parts, I'm thinking."

"And what would you say, my friend, if I told you that, just before he died, he confessed to a great murder?"

Hopkins suddenly took his pipe out of his mouth, and stared silently at Mr Hylton, who proceeded—

"Ay, and that he did it with that same coulter of yours that I have just spoken of."

"Lord have mercy upon us!" exclaimed Hopkins faintly, dropping his pipe on the hearth; "why—it—was not—the young Lord?—the Lord Alkmond? surely! surely!"

"Ay, but Jonas, dying, did declare it was, and that he did it with his own hand, and with that same coulter which is here!"

Hopkins got up from his seat, heaved a long-drawn sigh, and walked feebly and slowly a step or two about the room, with an amazed air.

"This is it," said Mr Hylton, beginning to uncover it.

"Phew!" cried Hopkins earnestly; "I wish it were not in *my* house here. It takes my breath off—it does, gentlemen! But—if it be my coulter, look ye, gentlemen, at one end—for, now that I do bethink me of it, I do well remember it was broken, and so would not hold on, and was to have been taken to the smith's. Is it so?"

It was, verily! And Hopkins saw, and most positively identified it, but would not touch the horrid instrument of murder, which Mr Hylton himself, with shuddering reluctance, took home with him. Further minute inquiry afforded complete corroboration to every part of the wretch Hundle's confession.

Godbolt, the head-keeper, was dead; but he was, beyond all doubt—as indeed had been proved at the trial of Ayliffe—in the wood on the night of the murder, going his rounds; and he it was who had stumbled over the body of Lord Alkmond; who, it now appeared, had been mistaken for him, owing to the obscurity of the night, and the sanguinary impetuosity of the assassins. And though true it was that Hundle had remained in the neighbourhood till some time subsequently to the trial, apparently occupied only as an occasional farming-servant, yet a few months afterwards he left, and was never seen or heard of any more in that quarter of the country. It appeared, also, that Giles Armstrong, his brother-in-law, ceased about the same time to be known in those parts; and there was every reason to believe that he was, as stated by Hundle, dead.

So then, poor Adam Ayliffe was innocent! innocent as the unborn child! The discovery, together with the reflections which it occasioned, was to Mr Hylton perfectly overwhelming. It was, indeed, an awful mystery—an inscrutable dispensation of Providence — one which baffled the impious daring of human conjecture; but was assuredly reconcilable, though our limited and disturbed faculties should be unable to perceive *how*, with the ineffable wisdom and justice of the Almighty Maker and Governor of the world. When, on the ensuing morning, Mr Hylton went to old Ayliffe, to communicate to him this extraordinary and most affecting intelligence, he greatly feared the effect which it might produce upon the venerable sufferer of nearly a twenty years' martyrdom.

He found the old man alone in his cottage, intently reading that Book which had been long the only solace of his life; one which either gave him a clue to the course of God's providence in human affairs, or conferred upon him the blessing of a composed resignation, an implicit faith and con-

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fidence that one day would make it known that He *had done all things well.* Deep in that old man's heart were engraved the solemnising and consolatory words of the Apostle—*For* NOW, *we see through a glass, darkly; but* THEN, *face to face:* NOW, *I know in part; but* THEN, *shall I know, even as also I am known.* God and His doings are at present surrounded with darkness, often impenetrable; but otherwise shall it be hereafter, when He shall be seen to have here been, where He was not known or thought to be! Therefore the old man received this amazing intelligence, the first shock over, with calmness and dignity. "God is good," said he, "who hath given me to see this day—to hear these tidings, as a ray of sunshine on the short path which leads me to my home yonder," and he pointed through his little window to the churchyard. "It will not shorten, nor could the want of it have lengthened, my sleep in the dust! This old body of mine hath increasing attraction to the dust; I feel the hour coming when it must drop, when the *earthly house of this tabernacle shall be dissolved:* and I leave it cheerfully here, to enter *a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this tabernacle,*" continued he solemnly, "*I do groan, being burthened: not for that I would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality may be swallowed up in life!* Links have I which yet bind me to this earth, but they will presently melt and dissolve away, and I escape. My son, mine only son, whom I loved, hath been offered up this twenty years upon my heart, an offering unto God: when He unlooseth him, I will receive him back thankfully, be it but for a moment. Ay, let me see my son, my son Adam, and I depart in peace, knowing that God hath heard my prayer! His mother hath long been dust—so will be soon his father—so ere long will he be!"

Here he paused long, and seemed to have fallen into a reverie, which Mr Hylton's feelings permitted him not to disturb. "I reckon his hair will be long gone grey — turning white—and his face sad and worn; and so will it be with—Sarah; but—I shall know them!" said the old man, his sad low voice such as would have softened a heart of stone. "Doth my Lord know of this?" he presently inquired, gazing with momentary stateliness at Mr Hylton, who answered in the negative. "I felt, then, Satan for a moment; but he is gone, God be thanked!" said the old man, with his former solemn and affecting tranquillity of tone and manner.

That day Mr Hylton wrote a letter to the Secretary of State, explaining the complete verification which he had obtained of the confession that had been made by the deceased miscreant Hundle.

From Ayliffe Mr Hylton went direct to the Earl of Milverstoke, deeming it of great importance to obtain, before answering the Secretary of State's letter, the hearty and decisive acquiescence of the Earl in the truth of the disclosure, which had thus signally vindicated the innocence of one whom he was going down to the grave believing to be the murderer of his son. The Earl's coach was standing at the Castle door when Mr Hylton arrived, his lordship being about to take his usual mid-day drive. The former was, however, shown immediately into the library, where the feeble Earl's valet and another were assisting in drawing on his lordship's gloves, and preparing him to encounter the out-door air, which was keen and biting. Mr Hylton's countenance showed that he came the bearer of some kind of serious intelligence; and on the Earl's inquiring, somewhat apprehensively, whether such were the case, and being answered in the affirmative, he ordered his attendants instantly to withdraw, and then he and Mr Hylton were alone.

"My grandson—is Alkmond well? Speak!" said the Earl, who had gone suddenly pale; "if anything has happened, let me in pity know at once."

"No, no, my Lord; nought that I know of, nor have reason to fear. When last I heard, he was well—quite well—and going on to great distinction."

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"Then what hath happened? Speak, whatever it be. I am old and feeble now, and suspense doth make me shake inwardly, as though my soul were palsied. Speak, good Mr Hylton," continued the Earl earnestly, drawing near to Mr Hylton, who, while the Earl was addressing him, had been hastily considering which was the best mode of breaking the matter, to one whose nerves were indeed, as he had said, shattered.

"My dear Lord Milverstoke," said he, with a frank air, "we are both now very far on in years, and have seen no little of God's dealing with mankind, to discipline and subdue our unruly and wicked hearts and wills. For wise and awful purposes of His own, His government of man is one of deep mystery; His doings are only partially revealed—sometimes never—in this dim scene of our trial. But He doth, now and then, condescend unto our weakness and blindness; and now shall I show you one marvellous and most signal doing of His. I pray your lordship to be calm while I speak," he continued, observing the Earl's gathering excitement—"calm as was that aged saint whom I have just quitted, when I told him of what I shall tell your lordship now. Oh, my dear Lord! Adam Ayliffe—poor banished Adam Ayliffe."

"Is he dead, then?" asked the Earl gravely, appearing suddenly calm, as if relieved from apprehension—"And if he be—how was his end? What said he before quitting to give his great account?"

"How feels your lordship towards him?" said Mr Hylton, glancing searchingly at the Earl, and removing from his pocket-book, and opening the Secretary of State's letter.

"I have, God be my witness, no ill-will towards him, my wretched brother sinner. Malice hath long since died within me, as you do know, dear friend Mr Hylton; and I feel, alas!—who am I that should bear malice to another!" said Lord Milverstoke with a perceptible shudder.

"Ah, my good Lord, I must now, then, tell you all! Adam Ayliffe is innocent—innocent as I am—of poor Lord Alkmond's murder." The Earl's face went suddenly of a ghastly whiteness, and in his eye, fixed intently on Mr Hylton, apprehension was evidently mingled with some of the sternness, and even fierceness, of a former day. But he seemed resolved, as Mr Hylton judged from his rigid and compressed lips, to listen in silence; so Mr Hylton proceeded, firmly and with his peculiar and impressive emphasis: "The providence of God, my dear Lord, hath at length cleared up this dreadful mystery, and all is revealed." The Earl sunk back in his seat, faintly asking for water, which Mr Hylton caused to be immediately procured. When his lordship had drunk a little, which Mr Hylton gave him, he desired those to be ordered out again who had come in to answer his summons. Within a few moments they were again alone.

"That—letter: is it from abroad?" gasped Lord Milverstoke, with tremulous eagerness.

"No, my Lord—no: you have no need to fear anything from the quarter you think of, where your munificence hath long, long ago extinguished all claim on your lordship. But this letter is from the Secretary of State, and encloseth the confession of a guilty wretch, hanged within these last few days only, and who, to the chaplain attending him, did in his last moments most solemnly and explicitly confess that he had done this foul murder: and proof that he spake truly the providence of God hath placed within our reach, and I have got that proof: with mine own eyes have I seen, with mine own hands have I felt, with mine own ears have I heard it! Oh, the wonderful"—

"My friend—my friend—your voice fails; I have not heard much of what you have been saying! Let me hear again, and somewhat louder," said the Earl, leaning forward, and speaking in a very feeble tone, his eyes also gazing languidly at Mr Hylton; who had, in truth, been speaking most deliberately, and with rather more distinctness and loudness than usual.

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He repeated what he had said—and as he went on the Earl closed his eyes, and shook his head gently and mournfully, his snowy attenuated hands resting on his knees, which were trembling visibly.

"My Lord—I perceive that you are not able now to hear me—that you are indisposed"—

"Now! now! or it may be—never!" said the Earl, opening his eyes, and looking with a steadfastness and energy at Mr Hylton, which he had not seen for years, and betokened the great effort of the Earl's will, which produced it. Mr Hylton then read the letter which he had received from London—Lord Milverstoke's eye being all the while fixed upon him with unwavering intensity; and also while he explained, as briefly but pointedly as possible, the steps which he had taken to obtain, and by which he had obtained, complete corroboration of the matters which had been spoken of by the murderer. When he had concluded, the Earl heaved a succession of deep-drawn sighs; and then tremulously said, "Is all this in judgment, or in mercy?"

"In mercy, my dear Lord! in mercy!" answered Mr Hylton, with a brightening countenance and a cheerful voice,—"in you, spared to advanced age, I see before me a monument only of mercy and goodness! Had you continued till now deaf to the teaching of His Holy Spirit, dead to His gracious influences—hateful, relentless, and vindictive—this which has now occurred would, to my poor thinking, have appeared to speak only in judgment, uttering condemnation in your ears, and sealing your eyes in judicial blindness! But you have been enabled to hear a still small voice, whose melting accents have pierced through your deaf ear, and broken a heart once obdurate in pride, and hopelessly unforgiving. Plainly I speak, my dear Lord, for my mission I feel to be now no longer one of terror, but of consolation. What hath happened is awful, but awful in mercy only, and condescension!"

"All this—all this—to a worm of the earth, guilty—utterly worthless!" faltered the Earl.

"Nay, call not that worthless which God himself hath deigned to redeem! which he hath endowed with immortality! and placed here to become fitted for eternal happiness!"

The Earl spoke not for some minutes.

"Twenty years!—nearly twenty years!—twenty years' exile and misery!—and injustice!" he presently exclaimed, clasping his hands over his forehead. "Oh, what an eternity of anguish upon earth!"

"Afflict not yourself unnecessarily, my dear Lord, nor in vain. Attribute not to *your* agency that which has been caused only by the unavoidably imperfect administration of justice—and for which you are not responsible, before either God or man. It was not you who placed this unfortunate man in the circumstances which led him into the mortal peril from which the providence of God only rescued him. It was, as he has all along reverentially owned, his own misconduct! Nor was it you who judged or condemned him; yet only your own heart can tell you, how you have stood before God towards this your brother, in spirit and in intention!"

"Oh, my heart condemns! hath terribly condemned me! Oh, fiend that I have been! And I"—he shuddered—"to be of all men thus exacting and vindictive!"

"These, my Lord, are painful but wholesome thoughts, and I dare not interrupt them."

"Alas! alas! Mr Hylton, were I to dwell upon them, I should despair: my eyes turn ever back upon the past, and *there* still gleams upon me vengeance unappeased!" He paused. "Dare I ask—what says poor old Ayliffe—Adam Ayliffe, the father?"

"He seems but half with us, my Lord, on earth! As though he had lingered only to hear these glad tidings, before descending into the dust!"

"Twenty years! twenty years hath he, too, spent in misery and wrong!"

"Twenty years have they been, my Lord, of resignation, of faith—which have raised and purified his noble

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soul—for noble, my Lord, even in the language of men, it is—from almost all dross of earth! Never one word has there fallen from him, as I do verily believe, during those long twenty years, which angels might not joyfully carry up to Heaven, as tokens of his fitness to join them!"

"Oh, venerable man! Think you that he would receive one whose head, aged as his own, is bowed with shame, while his is erect in virtue and nobleness?"

Mr Hylton was moved almost to tears at the spectacle which arose before his mind's eye, of these two old men meeting for the first, and it might be for the only time upon earth: and his offer to accompany his lordship at once to the cottage the Earl eagerly accepted, and they both took their departure. As the carriage approached, the Earl showed no little agitation at the prospect of the coming interview.

"Yonder," said Mr Hylton, exultingly—"yonder is the humble place where dwells still, and for but a little longer, one whom angels there have ministered to; with whom God deigneth to have communion;—and it is a hallowed spot!"

CHAPTER XIX.

The Earl spoke not; and in a few minutes' time he was to be seen slowly approaching the cottage door, leaning on the arms of Mr Hylton and a servant—another preceding him to announce his arrival, and standing uncovered outside the door as the Earl entered it: his lordly master himself uncovering, and bowing low as he stepped within, accompanied by Mr Hylton; who led him up to old Ayliffe, saying, "Adam, here comes one to speak with you, my Lord Milverstoke, who saith that he hath long, in heart, done to you and yours injustice—and hath come hither to tell you so." The Earl trembled on Mr Hylton's arm while he said this, and stood uncovered, gazing with an air of reverence at the old man; who, when they entered, was sitting near the fire, leaning on his staff beside a table, on which stood his old Bible, open, with his spectacles lying upon it, as though he had but just laid them there. He rose slowly as Mr Hylton finished speaking.

"My Lord," said he solemnly, and standing more erectly than he had stood for years, "we be now both very old men, and God hath not spared us thus long for nothing!"

"Ay, Adam Ayliffe, indeed it is so! Will you forgive me, and take my hand?" said the Earl faintly, advancing his right hand.

"Ay, my Lord—ay, in the name of God! I will, I do!—feeling, too, that I have had somewhat to forgive! For a father am I, and a father *wast* thou, my Lord! Here, since it hath been asked for, is my hand, that never was withheld from man that kindly asked for it; and my heart goes out to thee with it! God bless thee, my Lord, in these thine old and feeble days! Old and feeble are we both, *and the grasshopper is a burthen to us!*"

"Let me sit down, my friend," said the Earl gently, "I am feebler than thou; and be thou seated also!" They both sat down opposite to each other, Mr Hylton looking on in silence. "God may forgive me (and *may* He of his infinite mercy!)—thou, my fellow-creature, mayst forgive me; but I cannot forgive myself, when I am here looking at thee.

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Good Adam! what hast thou not gone through these twenty years!" faltered the Earl.

"Ay, twenty years it is!" echoed Ayliffe solemnly, sighing deeply, and looking with sorrowful dignity at the Earl. "Life hath, during those twenty years, been a long journey through a country dark and lonesome; but yet, HERE is the lamp that hath shone ever blessedly beside me, or I must have stumbled and missed my way for ever, and perished in the valley of the shadow of death!" As he spoke, his eyes were fixed steadfastly on the Earl, and he placed his hand reverently upon the sacred volume beside him.

"Adam, God hath greatly humbled me, and mightily afflicted me!" said the Earl in a moving tone; "I am not what I was!"

"The scourge thou doubtless didst need, my Lord, and it hath been heavily laid upon thee; yet it is in mercy to thee that thou art here, my good Lord!" said Ayliffe, with an eye and in a tone of voice belonging only to one who spoke with conscious authority. "It is in mercy, too," he continued, "to me that I am here to receive and listen to thee! I, too, have been perverse and rebellious, yet have I been spared! And art thou, then, my Lord, in thy heart satisfied that my poor son hath indeed suffered wrongfully?"

"Good Adam," said the Earl, sorrowfully, and yet with dignity, "I believe *now* that thy son is innocent, and ought not to have suffered; yet God hath chosen that we should not here see all things as He seeth them, Adam. The law, with which I had naught to do, went right as the law of men goeth; but, alas! as for me, what a spirit hath been shown by me towards thee and thine! Forgive me, Adam! There is one here that knoweth more against me"—the Earl turned towards Mr Hylton with a look of gloomy significance—"than I dare tell thee, of mine own awful guiltiness before God."

"He is merciful! He is merciful!" said Ayliffe.

"Wilt thou give me a token of thy forgiveness of a spirit most bitter and inhuman, such as mine hath been?" said the Earl presently. "If thy poor son Adam cometh home while I live, wilt thou speak with him, that he forgive me my cruel heart towards him?—that he accept amends at my hands?"

"For amends, my Lord," said Ayliffe, "doubtless he will have none but those which God may provide for him; and my son hath no claim upon thee for human amends. His forgiveness I know that thou wilt have for aught in which, my Lord, thou mays't have wronged him by uncharitableness, or he is not son of mine, and God hath afflicted him in vain."

Here Mr Hylton interposed, observing the Earl grow very faint, and rose to assist him to the door.

"Good day, friend Adam, good day," said Lord Milverstoke feebly, but cordially grasping the hand which Ayliffe tendered to him. "I will come hither again to see thee; but if I may not, wilt thou come yonder to me? Say yes, good Adam! for my days are fewer, I feel, than thine!"

"When thou canst not come to me, my good Lord, I will come to thee!" said Ayliffe sadly, following the Earl to the door, and gazing after him till he had driven away.

That evening Mr Hylton wrote off to the Secretary of State, fully detailing the corroboration which he had obtained of every part of Hundle's confession; and also communicating the fact of Lord Milverstoke's complete conviction of its truth, and expressing his lordship's extreme anxiety that not an hour should be lost in providing means for Ayliffe's immediate return home; Lord Milverstoke declaring his readiness to equip a vessel at his own expense, to proceed at the earliest moment abroad for that purpose. To this Mr Hylton added the firm conviction which he had from the first entertained of Ayliffe's innocence, and which had been strengthened by constant correspondence with him ever since his quitting England.

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Mr Hylton was summoned, by the Earl's desire, that evening to the Castle, which he had quitted scarcely two hours before, it being believed that his lordship was dying; and Mr Hylton was greatly affected when he saw the Earl, whom he verily believed to be indeed near his end, and who exhibited a solemn tranquillity, and expressed a mournful sympathy on behalf of old Ayliffe and his son, such as no one could have observed or heard without being moved. When Mr Hylton returned, leaving the Earl a little revived, it was in company with his lordship's solicitor, for whom a special messenger had been despatched by his lordship, immediately on his return to the Castle from visiting Ayliffe's cottage. The solicitor was an affable person, but on matters of business his lips were, so to speak, hermetically sealed. Not a word, therefore, passed between him and Mr Hylton respecting anything which might have taken place between the former and the Earl that evening. His lordship, however, afterwards rallied from the prostration which had been occasioned by the agitation of that day; and on the ensuing Sunday, Mr Hylton had the unspeakable satisfaction of seeing both the Earl of Milverstoke and old Adam Ayliffe at church, and of administering to them, kneeling side by side, amongst other reverent communicants, the Holy Sacrament. It was a sight that was long afterwards spoken of by those who beheld the two old men taking leave of each other at the church door with solemn courtesy, each, forgetful of mere earthly relations, which between them were so soon to cease, uncovering to the other in silence his venerable head, shaking each other by the hand; and then the one assisted into his stately coach, the other into the small cart, in which a friendly neighbour had conveyed him to the church. Then went they severally home from the house of their common Father — the *Father of the spirits of all flesh;* who was no *respecter of persons!* The spectacle of that day produced a deep and lasting impression on the beholders of it, but especially upon those who had lived long enough to remember, or had been told by those who did, what had taken place in Milverstoke some twenty years before.

Shortly after the happening of the events which have last been mentioned, there came on at Cambridge the exciting struggle for pre-eminence, to which the whole University had for some time been looking forward with an unusual degree of interest and curiosity, concentrated on the two individuals who have been already mentioned — Viscount Alkmond and Mr Southern. Their respective partisans lacked much of the calmness and good-nature of the two principals, who had had just that degree of intercourse with each other, before the hour of contest, which was calculated to excite reciprocal respect and apprehension. Each, it need hardly perhaps be said, continued ignorant of the strange and critical position which he and his family occupied with respect to the other.

Lord Alkmond was stimulated to his uttermost exertion; for to him, the future head and representative of a very ancient and noble family, and knowing with what intense anxiety, his noble grandfather awaited the issue—what could be more precious than intellectual distinction — the highest honours of a great University, won in fair fight with an antagonist so formidable, so worthy of being arduously conquered, as Mr Southern! But if the pressure of such incentives were great upon Lord Alkmond, what would have been the effect of his knowing, besides, who that formidable competitor really was? The son, not of his father's murderer, but of the heart-broken man who, having been falsely accused of that murder, had nearly perished for it on the gibbet, and afterwards passed, as the penalty of a crime, never committed by him, twenty years of his life in ignominious exile from his country—from his

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child—from his father! Would Lord Alkmond have retired from the contest, overpowered by his feelings, under an impulse of chivalrous generosity, leaving his innocent and unfortunate opponent to occupy the splendid post of distinction to which his great and admitted talents and acquirements entitled him?—Who can tell?

But suppose that Mr Southern had discovered who he himself really was, and the position in which he and his family at that moment stood with respect to his distinguished opponent—what would he have done? Or, suppose him aware that amongst those who regarded him as an object of interest—as one of the two observed of all observers, in that great academical struggle—was one who watched him with a straining eye and a well-nigh bursting heart—that very same long-dishonoured exile, that falsely adjudged murderer, *his father!* Yet so it was! Him, rebellious Nature nearly overpowered into forgetfulness of the solemnly pledged word of a Christian man, that he would not disclose himself to his son, till that son should have passed through the fiery ordeal into which he had entered, and on the issue of which depended all his earthly prospects. Yes, poor Ayliffe and his wife had indeed returned to their native country—to dreadful, but still dear England!

Unable to resist the poor father's importunities, Mr Hylton had accompanied him to Cambridge the day before that on which the contest commenced; and in going thither had exacted the promise which has been mentioned above. Besides this, Mr Hylton had earnestly impressed upon him lessons of piety and gratitude, towards Him who out of seeming evil brought so often good. "Great and terrible are the sufferings both of mind and body which you have undergone: but they have been inflicted upon you by an All-wise, Just, and Incomprehensible God.—Your duty is humble and joyful submission to all His dispensations! He owes you nothing; you owe him everything. As He is your Maker, so is He your Judge! It is for him alone to deal with you, both here and hereafter, as seemeth best to His infinite wisdom. Had you perished on the scaffold: had you died in ignominious exile, after leading a long life of bodily agony—insect of the dust! what could you have said against it to your Omnipotent Creator? But in judgment He has remembered mercy: He has given you the consolations of religion, RESIGNATION, peace of mind, even in your very sorrow. Awfully incomprehensible in His nature, He has yet permitted you to see in Him a FATHER; who chasteneth those whom he loveth, and even vouchsafes to them some few glimpses of his wondrous government of the world. Long-suffering, He stoops even to reason with his creatures! And is it no mark of His favour and blessing that you are now here, alive, with your loving wife beside you—and your venerable father alive to welcome you—and your character and innocence vindicated before all mankind? Nay, good Adam, look even further! Here is your son, likely to become the foremost man of Cambridge University, and have all the honours and advantages attending such high distinction. He is now contending, as an equal, with the future Earl of Milverstoke, whom he may vanquish by the force of his talents and learning. Could this have been, in all human probability, if what has happened to you had not taken place? And had he been strong and well-formed like you, might he not have gone to the plough—or at all events been never what he now is?"

Ayliffe, now a grey-headed, careworn, sad-hearted man, was reverently silent.—Oh, with what feelings did he first, at a distance, catch sight of his son! That son was in academical costume, walking alone with an air of deep thought for a while, till he was joined by—Lord Alkmond! Poor Ayliffe, who gazed at his son from the window of an inn, with Mr Hylton beside him, was violently affected on seeing him, and wept like a child.

"How like his mother!" he ex-

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claimed: and indeed so the poor youth was.

"And is not Lord Alkmond like his unhappy father?" inquired Mr Hylton.

"He is!" replied Ayliffe, with a cold shudder.

The contest lay entirely that year, as all had foreseen, between Lord Alkmond and Mr Southern, both of whom far outstripped all other competitors; and between those two the issue was long doubtful, to all but one or two of the most experienced and able members of the University, who privately expressed a decided opinion as to which of the two would be the senior wrangler. And at length their confident prediction was verified; for Mr Southern was declared the victor, after a most severe struggle with his noble antagonist, NOBLE in every sense of the word, — noble before, infinitely nobler after, this great contest, in which success had been to his lordship an object, on many accounts, so dearly prized. From him Mr Southern received the first, heartiest, and sincerest of the congratulations which were soon from all quarters showered upon him. If ever a pure and high spirit were shown by man, it was that which then actuated the young Lord Alkmond; and his modest, retiring, confused victor profoundly felt the generosity of his defeated but gifted antagonist.

Great curiosity was excited in the University about their new senior wrangler; and "Who is he?—Where does he come from?—Who knows anything about him?" were questions asked eagerly on every hand. Who, however, could answer them? Lord Alkmond was repeatedly asked; but, in spite of his apparent acquaintanceship with his victorious opponent, could give no information about him. Curiosity was raised to a high pitch, on the day after this great contest, when Mr Southern was seen walking along the streets of Cambridge, his face exhibiting traces of strong and recent excitement and agitation, and he arm-in-arm with a tall, elderly, grey-haired man, with a frank but melancholy countenance, calculated to prepossess in his favour every beholder, and a very homely appearance. The latter, also, looked as if he had not yet recovered from agitation: there was in his features a mingled expression of grief and exultation; and the two were observed frequently to gaze with sudden, strange, and loving earnestness at each other.

During the course of that day Lord Alkmond, walking arm-in-arm with Mr Hylton, appeared also somewhat pale, and as if he too had been lately the subject of strong emotion, or had not recovered from the effects of some agitating intelligence. He shook hands with Mr Southern in a marked manner, evidently with cordiality, yet with a certain gravity which he had never before exhibited; and took off his hat with a courteous air, yet a concerned countenance, to the person with whom Mr Southern was walking. With a sudden impulse, however, his lordship shook him cordially by the hand, and said, "Sir, allow me most warmly to congratulate you on Mr Southern's—I mean—Mr Ayliffe's—I mean, your son's success—and long may you live to see the fruits of his great distinction!" The person addressed bowed low, and in his turn looked greatly embarrassed. Nor was this all the food which events seemed to have provided for the lovers of mystery at the University, or in its neighbourhood. A grand entertainment was given, two days after the contest for the senior wranglership, by the Duke and Duchess of Waverdale, who had come to a residence of theirs near the University, chiefly on account of the interest which they took in their relative Lord Alkmond. Several of the august Heads of Houses were there, and the conversation naturally turned upon the University struggle, which had just closed.

"Our new senior wrangler is a man that hath dropped down among us from the moon, brimful of mathema tics," said the grave and learned Vice-Chancellor.

"He is a particular friend of mine," replied the brilliant Duchess of Waver-

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dale, with sudden and visible emotion, her eyes filling with tears—"and he was invited to dinner here to-day, but has an engagement which all who know him must respect him for keeping. Do they not, dear Mr Hylton?"

"Indeed, my dear Duchess, they do!" replied Mr Hylton, with correspondent emotion. "I shall never forget yesterday — or rather, the day before! I am, however, thinking anxiously about—you know whom!—What will *he* say of it?"

"Let us drink health and prosperity to the new senior wrangler," said the Duke, somewhat abruptly, glancing significantly at the Duchess and Mr Hylton; "for he is an honour to your University, Mr Vice-Chancellor and gentlemen! Come, my dear Alkmond"—

"Indeed I will — with my entire heart," he replied, eagerly; "I shall ever feel an inexpressible interest in Mr—Southern."

The Heads all looked at one another with a well-bred air of mystery, as though they had hit upon a problem that would bear discussing by-and-by! On the next evening it got noised about, that Lord Alkmond, Mr Southern, and the strange-looking person with whom he walked about so much, had all dined together, that afternoon, at the Inn: and it somehow or other got known, that conversation was particularly restrained and formal, so long as dinner was on the table, but seemed afterwards more earnest. And the next day the whole party quitted Cambridge in a carriage-and-four! Such, indeed, was the fact; and their destination was Milverstoke—whither Lord Alkmond anxiously hastened to give an account of the defeat which he had sustained, to his grandfather, and prepare him to hear by whom, in the mysterious and wonderful course of events, that defeat had been occasioned, Mr Hylton promising his assistance in the enterprise: for he knew, better even than the high-minded and frank-hearted young Viscount, the bitter mortification which was in store for the Earl; who appeared long to have set his heart upon his grandson's obtaining the distinction which his tutors had so confidently anticipated for him. The Earl had had, up to that moment, no knowledge whatever of young Ayliffe's being at the University; and how this fact, and that of his defeating Lord Alkmond, would be received by the Earl, was a problem which Mr Hylton was about to solve with some trepidation; and that trepidation he had communicated to Lord Alkmond. "But," said his lordship, "I will answer for my grandfather. When he first hears it all, he may be a little angry about the concealment, but that can be most amiably accounted for: and then, if I know the nature of the blood that runs in our family, he may be somewhat dissatisfied with me for my failure, but towards my distinguished opponent will feel as becomes a gentleman." How differently turned out events from those for which these excellent persons were preparing!—The Earl of Milverstoke was dead.

For some time before Mr Hylton's departure for Cambridge, the Earl's health and spirits had been greatly depressed; which Mr Hylton and his lordship's medical attendant attributed to the excitement and agitation occasioned by the Ayliffes' return to Milverstoke, and anxiety about Lord Alkmond's success at the University. As to the former, immediately on the Earl's hearing of their return, he sent a message to Mr Hylton, requesting him to take a chaise and bring with him Ayliffe and his wife to the Castle. This Mr Hylton did; and the Earl's manner in receiving and addressing them, was signally characterised by dignity and kindness.

"Remember always, Adam," said his lordship, "it was not I who caused your arrest on the charge upon which you were tried, nor placed you in the situation which led to your being arrested. You were fairly and openly tried by your equals, as every Englishman must be, who is charged, whether rightly or wrongfully, with an offence. I, who had no part in your trial, verily believed you guilty: I do declare it upon my honour—I do assure you of it solemnly before God;

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and I continued to believe it, till the extraordinary confession of the crime, by the man whose shameful cruelty first led you heedlessly astray. No man could force my understanding, Adam, to believe that you were innocent, when I conscientiously believed that you were guilty, or guilty, if I had really believed that you were innocent; but I freely own, humbly and penitently, before God, that I have, ever since you were charged with my unhappy son's death, felt, until lately, a most unjustifiable and unchristian animosity and vindictiveness towards both you and your exemplary father. Through the teaching of Mr Hylton, and the blessing of God, I have, I trust, been greatly altered, and regard my past conduct herein with downright shame and grief. But Christ my Saviour hath looked upon me in mercy, and (I trust) softened a heart which was a heart of stone. I hope that the consolations of religion are yours, and that they have been during your banishment; and now that you are returned, I hope that peace will attend you both, nay all of you, for the rest of your days. I am myself a great sinner,"—here the Earl became greatly affected, turned pale, and paused for a while; then he proceeded in a broken voice—"I am, alas! a much greater sinner than you think of, or than probably any one knows of, but my kind, pitying friend, Mr Hylton. But I have repented — yes, in dust and ashes; and may God accept of my repentance! I am not much longer for this world. Would I had led a better life, and set a better example to those around me. And now, do you, both of you, heartily forgive me, my friends — my long-oppressed, my excellent and greatly pitied friends?" continued the Earl, in a very moving manner.

Both Ayliffe and his wife, whom the Earl had made to sit down near him when they entered, were in tears all the while that the Earl was speaking; for there was something indescribably touching and solemn in the tones of his voice and the expression of his countenance. They fervently assured his lordship that all was forgotten in the joy of their returning, and with the bloody stain of guilt for ever blotted out.

"Then may God Almighty bless you both, my poor persecuted friends! bless you here and hereafter, and prepare *you* for that day which I feel is drawing awfully near to me! Pray for me while I am with you; and when I am dead, continue in a kind and forgiving spirit, and be gentle to my memory. He that will succeed me will behave more worthily in his station than I have. I am not deserving of such a grandson! But I am faint, and must bid you farewell. Give me your hands, my friends; and when you return home, you will find here a little token a-piece for you, of my good-will, and an earnest only of what I will do for you!" Then he gave to each a small sealed packet, and they withdrew, leaving him much exhausted. They found in each packet bank-notes to the amount of £500.

When Mr Hylton had set off for Cambridge with Adam Ayliffe (whose accompanying him was not known to the Earl), Lady Alkmond, who was, from the first, acquainted with the secret concerning him who had become unexpectedly so formidable a competitor with her son, resolved, being left alone with the Earl, and seeing his subdued and gentle temper, herself to break the whole matter to him; and this she did so judiciously, and with such winning tenderness, that the Earl expressed only great, very great surprise, but no anger whatever. He was, on the contrary, much affected by the silent unostentatious generosity of his daughter, the Duchess of Waverdale. When the news came that Lord Alkmond had been defeated, and by young Ayliffe, Lady Alkmond shed a flood of tears; and with a mother's fondness lamented the grievous disappointment of their proud and ambitious hopes. When she had sufficiently recovered her self-possession, she went to the Earl, and broke the tidings to him as gently as possible. He was then lying in the bed from which he was destined never to rise, and received

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the intelligence with perfect calmness, though a faint flush at first overspread his fine yet wasted features. The first words which he uttered, after tenderly folding his arms round Lady Alkmond, and kissing her, were these:—"This God hath done, and as a scourge for my pride! As such I humbly receive it. God bless the youth Ayliffe! may God bless them both! Oh send for my grandson! my daughter! my friend Hylton!"

The next day the doctor told Lady Alkmond that he had noticed a striking alteration in the Earl's countenance, and advised her to prepare for a great change. Other medical assistance was sent for, and an express despatched for Lord Alkmond, the Duchess of Waverdale, and Mr Hylton. The Earl's solicitor was also summoned, and remained alone for some little time with his lordship, who caused some additions to be made to his will. Getting rapidly fainter and worse, his lordship directed his confidential servant to go in the coach to the cottage of old Adam Ayliffe, with an entreaty to him to come, in remembrance of a promise which he had made to the Earl of Milverstoke some time before.

On hearing this the old man trembled, and covered his face with his hands for some moments. Then, with a solemn countenance, getting his hat and stick, and putting his Bible under his arm, he said to the servant, "Ay, I will go with thee to my Lord!"

When the Earl saw him, it was about evening, and the sun was setting. Its declining rays shone softly into the magnificent chamber in which lay the dying nobleman.

"Adam, see—it is going down!" said Lord Milverstoke in a low tone, looking mournfully at Adam, and pointing to the sadly splendid spectacle of the sinking sun.

"How is thy soul with God?" said the old man, with great solemnity.

The Earl placed his hands together, and remained silent for some moments. Then he said, "I would it were, good Adam, as I believe thine is!"

"Nay, my good Lord, think only of thine own, not mine; I am sinful, and often of weak faith. But hast THOU faith and hope?"

"I thank God, Adam, that I have some little! Before I was afflicted I went astray! But I have sinned deeper than ever thou thinkest, good soul!"

"But His mercy, to whom thou art going, is deeper than all thy sins!"

"Oh, Adam! I have this day often thought, that I could die more peacefully in thy little cottage than in this place!"

"So thy heart and soul be right, what signifies where thou diest?"

"Adam," said the Earl gently, "thou speakest somewhat sternly to one with a broken spirit—but God bless thee! Thy honest voice searcheth me! Wilt thou make me a promise, Adam?" said the Earl, softly placing his hand upon that of Ayliffe.

"Ay, my Lord, if I can perform it."

"Wilt thou follow my unworthy dust to the grave? I would have followed thee, hadst thou gone first?"

"I will!" replied Adam, looking solemnly at the Earl.

"And now give me thy prayers, dear Adam! Pray for him that—is to come after me—for I go—and"— He paused long, and his eyes remained closed. After a while, he faintly murmured, "Peace!—peace!"—

Lady Alkmond, who was at the other side of the bed, observed a great change come suddenly over the Earl's face. While Adam was opening the Bible, and adjusting his glasses to read a Psalm, she hastened round, leaned over the bed, and kissed the Earl's forehead and cheek, grasped his thin fingers, and burst into weeping. But the Earl saw her not, nor heard her; he was no longer among the living.

The Earl of Milverstoke left to the Ayliffes the munificent bequest of ten thousand pounds, which he styled in his will "an humble peace-offering." He also directed that all the land which had been purchased on his account

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from old Ayliffe, should be reconveyed to him free of every charge: and bequeathed twenty pounds for a tablet to be erected in the church to the memory of old Adam Ayliffe, the inscription on which was to be written by Mr Hylton. Concerning him, his lordship said that he left the Rev. Henry Hylton his affectionate and his most unworthy blessing; grieving that he had made the Earl most solemnly promise to leave him no legacy whatever, on hearing from his lordship that such was his intention. But his lordship left Mary Hylton, the daughter of his dear friend the Rev. Henry Hylton, five thousand pounds.

It cost that venerable man a great effort to comply with the wishes of the young Earl of Milverstoke and his sorrowful relatives, that he should bury his late friend. But he did; and old Adam Ayliffe went as one of the mourners, and stood with a majestic countenance, only a few yards from the spot where, within three months' time, he was himself laid, that he might take his rest beside her whom he had loved, till both — till all mankind — shall rise at the sound of the trumpet of the Resurrection. He died with noble calmness. His very dead countenance diffused a living peace around the room, for its expression was that of a heavenly serenity. Him, also, Mr Hylton buried; the Earl of Milverstoke joining with Adam Ayliffe and his son, in following the honoured remains of the old patriarch through a little concourse in the churchyard, who wept silently as they passed.

All those here mentioned are long since mouldered into dust, their kindred dust. They are dead, but have not perished, being only asleep. Perhaps already they see no longer through a glass, darkly, but face to face: knowing no longer in part, but even as they are known. We, who have come after them, see also, at present, as they saw, only through a glass, darkly: wherefore we look for full clearness hereafter only; and till our sleeping time come, walk trembling, but hopefully.

CONCLUSION

OF

NOW AND THEN.

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THE

LILY AND THE BEE

AN APOLOGUE OF THE CRYSTAL PALACE OF 1851

A NEW EDITION, CAREFULLY REVISED, WITH NOTES, AND

A

PRELIMINARY EXPOSITION

BY

SAMUEL WARREN

D. C. L. F. R. S.

HUNC CIRCUM INNUMERÆ GENTES POPULIQUE VOLABANT.
AC VELUTI IN PRATIS, UBI APES ÆSTATE SERENA
FLORIBUS INSIDUNT VARIIS, ET CANDIDA CIRCUM
LILIA FUNDUNTUR; STREPIT OMNIS MURMURE CAMPUS.
—*Æneid*, VI. 706-710.

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS
EDINBURGH AND LONDON
MDCCCLIV

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TO

RICHARD OWEN,

D.C.L. F.R.S. ETC.

A MAN OF TRUE PHILOSOPHIC SPIRIT,

WHOSE UNWEARIED AND PROFOUND RESEARCHES REFLECT

LUSTRE ON THE SCIENCE OF HIS COUNTRY,

THIS WORK IS INSCRIBED

BY THE AUTHOR,

AS A MEMORIAL OF CORDIAL FRIENDSHIP.

INNER TEMPLE,
July 1854.

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PREFACE TO THE PRESENT EDITION.

THE *Lily and the Bee* is an attempt, in a humble and reverent spirit, to interpret that which its Author conceived to be the true spiritual significance, the hidden teaching, of the Temple of Wonder and Worship, of 1851. With the motives and objects by which he was influenced, it is impossible for him to feel anything like resentment, on account of certain fierce criticisms which this little book has been fated to encounter, and may yet encounter. Few works, indeed, of modern days, have occasioned such a contrariety of critical judgment, as *The Lily and the Bee:* for while it has been characterised, by persons of undoubted competency, as totally unworthy of the occasion, or even the Author, it is certain that a widely different estimate has been formed of it by many, some of whom stand foremost in the ranks of criticism, scholarship, and philosophy; while it has also had a very large sale in this country, been reprinted in America and on the Continent, and translated into German and Italian, if not also other languages. The singular conflict of opinion respecting it, cannot be better illustrated, than by the circumstance, that while one of the Reviews stated that the Author 'had earned a title to be regarded as the Milton of the Exhibition,' another pronounced *The Lily and the Bee* to be 'the raving of a madman in the Crystal Palace.' This marvellous diversity of opinion in England, is thus noticed by the Italian translator, in his expository Preface. '*The Lily and the Bee* is a work which, on account of its originality, has been exposed to the extremes of criticism, by the eminent men of a great nation. By some it has been extolled to the skies, by others utterly condemned. Such a work vindicates its claim to be judged of by nations at large: to whom it belongs to award to it those sublime attributes which triumph over time, or consign it to oblivion, as the extravagant creation of a distempered brain.'[1]

[1] Un' opera infine, che per la sua originalità destò cosi varie e contradittorie opinioni fra i sommi di una nazione, che è grande; da quale esaltata con frenesia di ammirazione ai cieli, da quale sprofondata negli abissi. Un' opera tale deve essere a dritto guidicata dalle nazioni; e che le nazioni le nediano il pregio di sublimità che trionfa dei secoli, e del tempo, o la dannino all' obblio, come una stravaganza e delirio.'—*Il Giglio e l'Ape*, Prefazione, x.

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A work thus spoken of by an accomplished foreigner, who has deemed it worthy of being exquisitely rendered into the lovely language of his country, the Author hopes he may venture to regard as not entirely beneath the notice of his own countrymen. While grateful for the reception with which it has been already favoured, he sincerely defers to any adverse judgment pronounced by candid and competent critics. *Quot homines, tot sententiæ.*

Whatever its merits or demerits, and whatever may be the cause, this work remains the only record, of its kind, of the Crystal Palace of 1851, and the wonderful assemblage of mankind which it attracted from all parts of the earth.

The present edition, which has been carefully revised, is intended for a far larger class of readers than was contemplated on the original publication of the work, and is accompanied by numerous Notes; and the ensuing Exposition contains all that the Author wishes to say on the subject. It is, moreover, so full, that it may be regarded almost as a prose version of the Poem itself.

INNER TEMPLE, LONDON, *July* 1854.

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THE

EXPOSITION

OF

THE LILY AND THE BEE.

When Spenser first published his immortal *Faery Queen*, he felt it necessary to prefix to it a clue to 'the continued allegory, or dark conceit,' of which it consisted, in the form of a Letter to Sir Walter Raleigh, which he said 'expounded his general intention and meaning; as well for avoiding of jealous opinions and misconstructions, as for' Sir Walter's 'better light in reading thereof: from which he might gather the whole intention of the conceit; and, as in a handful, gripe all the discourse, which otherwise might seem tedious and confused.' He owned that 'the beginning of the whole work seemed abrupt;' but asserted his right, as a Poet, 'to thrust into the midst, even where it most concerned him: and there recoursing to the things forepast, and divining of things to come, make a pleasing analysis of all.'[1]

Walking in the light of this precedent, though at an immeasurable distance from the illustrious One that set it, the author of *The Lily and the Bee* here offers some account of a performance more deeply considered than it has been given credit for, by some who have written and spoken about it with confident contempt.

Though the main object of the Book is by no means to be sought in a commemoration of the Crystal Palace of 1851, its pages seek to reflect, however faintly, some of the splendours of that magnificent and majestic spectacle, which will ever remain peerless, and alone, in its moral glory, however great may be the merits and attractiveness of its successors, here or elsewhere. That is, however, altogether a subordinate purpose of the author; who sought to seize an occasion for setting forth great Truths affecting the eternal welfare of mankind: for he thought that those Truths, of a high and holy import, spoke

[1] The letter is dated the 23d January 1589; and is prefixed to the first edition, that of 1590.

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loudly and gloriously in the ear of a devout, humble, and watchful beholder and listener.

Concerning the Structure, and Title, of the work, the author, before proceeding to the SUBJECT of it, would premise,—

First, that *The Lily and the Bee* is, in the nature of a Lyrical Soliloquy, supposed to be the meditative utterance of a devout Poet-Philosopher, musing under the guidance of an attendant Spirit, first by day, and then by night, in the Crystal Palace of 1851. Poetry depends essentially upon Thought; which should be trusted for the selection of such forms of expression as it may deem suitable, in order to reach an attuned imagination. Even Pindar's contemporaries deemed his style and manner frequently harsh, abrupt and obscure; a penalty which must needs be incurred by any one, who ventures to depart from the common standards of his time. *The Lily and the Bee* is written chiefly in rhythmical prose (of which it is by no means the only specimen in our literature),[1] and which the author is certain fitted itself, spontaneously, to the tone of his thoughts and imaginings. The Poem draws largely on the reader's fancy; and seeks, instead of bewildering him in multitudinousness of detail, to open, in all directions, vistas of reflection, to a well-stored mind, by sudden and faint suggestions and associations, every one derived from some object in the Crystal Palace. Apparent orderliness of method was designedly discarded. Guided by the impression which so stupendous a spectacle was calculated to produce on a susceptible imagination, the author sought to excite in that of the reader, a sense of lustrous confusion, slowly subsiding into distinctness, and then developing grand proportion, harmony, and system. This result, however, as in the physical prototype, is intended to be gained, not all at once, but after yielding for awhile to a thrilling sense of bewilderment; and only after some effort to discover and adjust relations, at first lost in a dim vastness, between the myriad Parts, and the mighty Whole.

Secondly, concerning the Title. It was deemed that a LILY, and a BEE, were fitting exponents of thoughts and feelings called forth by a deep contemplation of the moral aspects and bearings of the Crystal Palace: that the Lily had her grand and tender lesson, the Bee his hum of mystery and wonder, far beyond the contrast suggested between Animal and Human Industry, between Art and Nature. Both Flower and Insect may point to profound relations between Man, and his new and gorgeous spectacle.

There were Bees in the Crystal Palace, as all may have seen; and there was also a Lily, observed by but one or two; but of its presence there, the author was unaware, till after the publication of the Poem. He was then, for the first time, informed that a common field Lily had been one day noticed by a lady, struggling modestly into existence, between the small stones forming the embankment round some of its brilliant and favoured sisterhood, the exotics in the Transept. The Bee was a wonderful exhibitor, though he never had a medal awarded him, of skilled industry: a perfect Geometer, Architect, and Manufacturer; and, moreover, a citizen of a well-compacted State; his springs of action hidden in dense mystery; baffling the most piercing scrutiny of the human intellect, but disclosing sufficient to startle and humble the presumption and pride of MAN.

The idea of the Lily, with her rich train of heavenly associations, fell into

[1] Witness the magnificent choruses in the *Samson Agonistes*.

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the author's mind, while indulging in a reverie in the Crystal Palace, concerning the Bee: and these divine words sounded in his ear as if whispered by an Angel,—

Consider the Lilies of the field, how they grow: they toil not, neither do they spin: and yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory, was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? [1]

It may, moreover, be recollected, that in ancient pictures, the Angel of the Annunciation is generally represented as bearing a Lily in his hand, while telling his hallowed tidings to the Virgin.[2]

Thus, then, it was that the ideas of the Lily and the Bee came together; and their combined influence seemed thenceforth to invest the Crystal Palace, and all it contained, with spiritual significance.

The *Subject* of the Poem, is MAN, in his threefold relations[3] to the Earth, to his fellow-man, and to God. It is, however, Man, the Son of Adam—the *Man of the Bible*, with whom the poem deals. The beholder sees in the Palace, the Inspired Volume,[4] in all the languages of the earth; and from this radiant source derives a clue to the origin and present condition of Man, his Doings, and his Destiny. The eye is first directed to the sculptured figures of Adam, and Eve,[5] in their hour of grief and shame, as just driven out of Eden: he gazes, awhile awed into silence, 'a son, come through six thousand years,' to look on his First Parents, presently recounting to them the doings of their descendants, partakers of their fallen nature. He murmurs the inquiry, whether they feel the full significance of the scene, on which their own deeds have had so portentous an influence! The next object is their blood-stained first-born, CAIN, 'the crimson first-fruits[6] of their Fall, blooming ever deadly since,' in hate, violence, outrage, war, massacre, and murder. The reluctant eyes of Adam and Eve are pointed to the gleaming array of weapons of destruction, tempered exquisitely, polished, and gemmed as though objects of pride and satisfaction! They are told of dungeons, chains, and racks: of the gallows and the guillotine which his children dare not exhibit:—that there are arrayed around, evidences of the idolatry of their descendants; that they display, as objects of admiration and pride, their gorgeous apparel! forgetful of its original: that their offspring, brothers and sisters! buy, sell, and torture one another!

That they are still toiling, and spinning, and tilling the earth, eating their bread in the sweat of their brow: waiting the fearful and sudden End of all things.

They are asked if they have seen the sick, the maimed, the halt, the blind, the broken-hearted, of their Sons and Daughters who have wandered past them; and whether they perceived, through the disguises with which they concealed it from one another, their corrupt condition,—their lust, ambition, malice, pride, selfishness, covetousness, falsehood, and hypocrisy! They are told that their descendants now spend their days like a tale that is told; that they are but as grass of the field, flourishing in the morning, and withering in the evening; returning unto the dust, cursed for their first parents' sake! That they are still tempted by the Tempter of Eve.[7] They are asked what, but for their

[1] Matt., vi. 28–30. [2] *Post.* p. 52. [3] P. 2. [4] P. 48. [5] Pp. 43, 44. [6] P. 45. [7] Pp. 45, 46.

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disobedience, would have been the condition of their progeny? Whether they communicated to their Sons and Daughters the dread mystery done in Eden? But at this depth of sorrow and humiliation into which the beholder sinks, on seeing the first Adam, hope springs up: the heavy shadow on his brow is seen to move,[1] and his sorrow-laden eye suddenly beams with light, telling of a *Second Adam*.[2]

Adam and Eve have thus become twin founts of woe and joy, of despair and hope, of death and life, through Him who overcame death, and brought Life and Immortality to light: and in this solemn spirit is addressed the Sovereign[3] who has gazed on these images of her first parents; partaking, equally with those over whom she rules, their fallen nature, their death, and resurrection; and with whom she must stand before the judgment-seat, in the Last Day.

Contemplated from this point of view, it is MAN, as infinitely beyond, yet seen through, HIS WORKS, whom the Crystal Palace is said to have really exhibited. This was the Lesson written all around[4] it, in letters shining into the awakened Soul; the lesson of True Wisdom,[5] to be learnt from the sight of his own multifarious handiwork. By this inner-light, the devout observer beholds MAN as he was, as he is, and as he shall be, after all the chances and changes of this mortal life; indued with awful powers and responsibilities, strictly proportioned and adjusted to his means and opportunities. It is thus that he finds his true position, in the creation and economy of God: his relation to his Maker, and his fellow-creatures: and subsidiarily, to the ordained scene of their action and probation[6] with its checkered, its myriad incidents.

These threefold relations are all pervaded by the idea of a UNITY: on which the eye settles most steadily, at the moment when otherwise it would be wandering, dazzled and bewildered by the endlessly varying splendours attracting it: and as soon as the beholder has caught a glimpse of this Unity, and not till then, he sees the true and deep significance of the spectacle, speaking to the mind of Statesman, Philosopher, and Divine, in sublime accents; and he exclaims, 'O! rare unity in multiplicity! uniformity in endless variety.'[7] His own personal relations to the scene are suddenly changed; he feels one —but one, still one, of that mighty and mysterious Unity, *Man*: and then sixty centuries[8] are suddenly felt sweeping past him: the air is instinct with LIFE, the life of Man, his hopes, fears, agonies, delights, woes, and cares, ever since his first parent was placed on the earth: MIND is felt all around diffused: MAN rises up, everywhere Man! in his manifestations and fortunes, multiform;[9] mysterious in his doings, and his destiny.

The very Key-stone of the arch of this Unity, is REVELATION; a truth peremptorily insisted on throughout: its reception constituting Light, and its rejection, Darkness, as to the origin and destiny of man, and the objects and conditions of his existence: without which all the Nations into which he is multiplied, may be regarded as but so many patches of poor Insects, crawling over a globe swarming with other Insects.

This Unity exists in respect of RELIGION: there being but one true religion, of which all others are corruptions; even as there is but one God and Father of us all: towards whom, if it can be distinctly conceived, and may be reverently expressed, Man stands in the relation of one Unity, towards that

[1] P. 46. [2] P. 46. [3] P. 46. [4] P. 47. [5] P. 47.
[6] P. 27. [7] P. 5. [8] P. 4. [9] P. 4.

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other ineffable Unity; all that ever descended from Adam, being but as one Man, before one God.[1]

A Unity as regards MANKIND: in respect of origin, character, doings, and destiny.[2] For we are all the result of the one Almighty Fiat, recorded in Scripture, by which Adam was created and became[3] a living soul, his blood running in every human being that is now, or has ever since been, on the earth. There is a plain unity of our essential physical, intellectual, and moral nature: a unity of Language, through all its variations since the day on which the one language, then spoken over the whole earth, was confounded at Shinar.[4] A unity of Mental Action as evidenced by the objects[5] to which the mind of man has addressed itself always, everywhere, and the manner of its doing so, however modified by circumstances: a unity of moral nature; of wants, wishes, hopes, fears, aversions, and the objects exciting them: a loudly-spoken unity and universality of Disease in our moral nature; and as loudly-spoken a unity and universality of Remedy—the Fall and Redemption of Man, as revealed by God in the One Inspired Volume. A unity in respect of Destiny: a life hereafter, the condition of which is dependent upon conduct here: and which will be righteously determined by the Judge of all the Earth, in that one Great Day in which the Doom of every descendant of Adam, will be pronounced irrevocably.

Thus a mournful splendour is thrown over the suddenly unrolled scroll of the doings of Man during his pilgrimage on the planet assigned to him for his temporary abode: Unity being a tie binding together into an organised Whole, both spectacle and spectators; linking into one, each imaging the other, Man's Past, Present, and Future.[6] This may be regarded as constituting the *Esoteric* teaching of the Great Spectacle: the *Exoteric* being those more obvious ones which regard its material aspects, forms, and characteristics: the latter being the mere vehicle of the former.[7] And in this spirit we approach the spectacle as 'a Mystic Mirror, brightly reflecting the past, darkly the future.'[8]

The first reflection from this Mirror, is of the Past—revealing two ancient Gatherings of the human family, recorded in Holy Writ, one of these the first since the Flood; both pregnant with warning and consolation, suggesting also resemblance, and contrast. The former of these Gatherings is that on the plain of Shinar, with which the Poem opens, when the impious audacity of Man was punished by that confusion of tongues which has ever since prevailed, and which was perceived in full action[9] incessantly, in the Crystal Palace; the spectators of which came from every quarter of the Globe, to contribute their own handiwork, to scan and admire that of others. Then are indicated several points of the Unity which has been spoken of. The latter of

[1] P. 47. [2] P. 4.

[3] 'He did not merely *possess* it,—he *became* it, (Gen. ii. 7). It was his proper being: his truest self; the Man in The Man.'—COLERIDGE.

[4] P. 1. 'The bricks at Susa are stamped with inscriptions in the primitive Babylonish character. It is found on those which compose the foundations of the primeval cities of Shinar: and if the *Birsi Nimrûd* be admitted to represent the tower of Babel—an identification supported not merely by the character of the monument, but the universal belief of the early Talmudists,—it must, in the substructure of that edifice, embody the vernacular dialect of Shinar, at the period when the earth was of one language and of one speech.'—COL. RAWLINSON, *Jour. of Royal Asiatic Society*, vol. x. Part I., Prel. Rem., p. 20, —cited in FORSTER'S *One Primeval Language*, vol. iii. p. 3.

[5] P. 26. [6] P. 3. [7] P. 3. [8] P. 3. [9] P. 4.

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the two Gatherings is that on the plain of Dura: which has also its contrasts and resemblances. It was a Royal Spectacle; an assembly of all the greatness of many peoples, nations, and languages: but for the purpose of deliberately defying and dishonouring the Deity, by a public act of Idolatry. The third Gathering is that commemorated by the Poem: infinitely surpassing the other two, in every incident of grandeur; and sublimely contrasting, in occasion and object:[1] kindling the affection of Man for his fellows; developing reverence and love for their Almighty Father; and exhibiting the diversified and resplendent results of sixty centuries of industry and thought. But the spectacle has a deep moral significance, in connection with its ancient predecessors: the Tower of Babel, and the Golden Image of Nebuchadnezzar, are not the only modes of dishonouring and disobeying the Deity, and committing the sins of presumption, vain-glory, and idolatry. This Mirror also darkly reflects the Future — the Final Gathering of Man:[2] which may well overshadow the beholder's mind with awe, and lend a fearful and sublime significance to the scene before him, its recollections and associations.

There are two Books of *The Lily and the Bee:* the first representing a DAY, and the second a NIGHT, and EARLY MORN, passed in the Crystal Palace.

THE FIRST BOOK.

I. DAY in the Crystal Palace, deals directly with the Present, its people and actions; but as they appear with light reflected from the Past, after six thousand years' toil and experience. The dispersed condition of our species, and the present forms of their national existence, with their origin as recorded in Scripture, are represented by the figure of the Queen passing amidst them all: it being designed, at the same time, to indicate the position of England, and her glorious mission[3] among her sister nations, civilised and savage. It is then sought to afford a few dazzling[4] glimpses of the scene within the Palace,—as well the endless variety of objects, as of the spectators gazing at them; suggesting a community of object and attention to every different section of mankind, at different times, under infinitely varied circumstances—awakening similar tastes, eliciting the action of similar energies; and so indicating a unity or identity of nature. The spectators themselves are grouped[5] into great classes, and the spectacle regarded as a touchstone of their respective characters, capacities, and knowledge. Whilst the imagination is revelling among the varied scenes so calculated to excite and charm its faculties, scenes which the great poets of ancient and modern times are invoked to celebrate and eternise, philosophers are seen contemplating the combined results of profound and patient experiment and observation: noting the progress of Science,—as well where she stumbled, as in her rapid and sure onward career, till she has achieved those transcendant results collected before the admiring and awe-stricken beholder: its microscope and telescope revealing two Infinitudes:[6]—mechanics, chemistry, optics, steam, magnetism, electricity, all combining to force on the mind a conviction, that Man of the present age, with relation to his powers over the natural world, stands towards his ancient predecessors, as Light to Darkness.

[1] P. 2. [2] Pp. 41, 47. [3] P. 11. [4] Pp. 3, 13, 14, 26. [5] Pp. 12–14. [6] P. 16.

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A Picture is suddenly exhibited of Man standing amid the dazzling results[1] which his skill has effected, in dealing alike with the animate and inanimate creation,—with the subtlest, most secret and potent elements and powers of nature. Relying on the conscious strength of his faculties, he ascends higher and higher in thought and speculation, till he passes the bounds of material things, and dares to enter those rarefied regions, which seem to call forth powers hitherto latent within him: he rises, as it were attracted by a hidden affinity of his nature, till he approaches the idea of Deity, the Author of Nature, in His awful attributes and perfections:[2] he is then overwhelmed by realising a personal relation between the creature and the Creator: who vouchsafes to reveal Himself in the language of Inspiration, as having *made Man in His own image*, now darkened by disobedience; but still regarding His fallen creature with compassion, and dictating reasonable terms of restoration to His favour: on which Man is represented as sinking into an abyss of reverence, love, and fear, worshipping, falling down, and kneeling before the Lord His Maker:[3] who is the Lord His God, and Man the people of His pasture, and the sheep of His hand.

Beauty is seen thronging those regions of the Palace where Silks are glistening, in every hue, and of which the ingenuity and cruelty of Man has for ages rifled a poor worm![4] mercilessly destroying it, in doing so. Certain questions are suggested, to which no answer can be given: and the ill-fated worm is regarded as affording, in its own mysterious nature, an emblem and type of CHANGE and IMMORTALITY.[5]

The great Diamond is then addressed as the Queen of Gems, the cynosure of myriad eyes, and supposed to be holding a Levee of her admirers. It is hinted that questions are proposed freely as to her real nature and pretensions, which courtly lips do not utter too loudly: she is also reminded that she has a black sister,[6] and asked if she is disposed to disown and despise her? and is finally told that some gazing on her possess infinitely more precious gems than she—Genius, Charity, Resignation, Faith. She is also asked if she has noted the thoughts and feelings which the sight of herself has excited in many of them before her? Vanity, Rapacity, Covetousness?

On the outskirts of the crowd of worshippers is seen a philosopher, smiling

[1] Pp. 18, 19. A distinguished scholar, since *The Lily and the Bee* was published, has pointed out to the author a remarkable resemblance between the passage in the text above referred to, and the following, in a Chorus of the *Antigone* of Sophocles, which was certainly not present to the author's mind at the time. It is a grand one; and exhibiting the great Grecian Poet musing on the marvels of his race, by the limited light of their achievements twenty-two centuries ago. It may be thus presented to the English reader.

"Many things are wondrous: but naught is so wondrous as man! He fearlessly travels the foaming ocean, borne on the stormy blast, over the billows roaring around him!

"He subdues and tills the wide earth.

"He makes the race of light-hearted birds, the fierce beasts of the forest, and the finny tenants of the deep, his prey.

"Truly Man is subtle and skilful!

"He tames the wild horse, and the mountain bull.

"He has learnt articulate speech; Design, that is swift as the winds; and the economy of social intercourse.

"He fences himself in from the darts of the frost, and the rain.

"Ever fertile of expedients, he goes on his way prepared against each emergency of the future.

"Death alone, is beyond his power to battle: at its approach he stands helpless!"
—*Antigone*, 332-3.—See also Job, xxviii. 1-11.

[2] P. 18. [3] P. 19. [4] P. 25. [5] P. 25, Note 1. [6] P. 20.

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at their eager curiosity, ignorant wonder, and vain longings; and he betakes himself to a distant spot where lies a shapeless slab of stone, inscribed with faint and mystical characters, which his science interprets as indicative of countless ages in the history of the earth—disclosing successive stages of existence, and mysterious tenants of the earth, in every past condition. Then are brought to light the astonishing revelations of Geology in these our latter times. Of these a succession of sombre and strange, but truthful pictures is presented: exhibiting extinct, varied, uncouth, tremendous forms of the animal creation; but no trace of Man, or his doings: while the shining traces of ONE God are seen everywhere: whereupon the Philosopher breaks forth into a Hymn[1] to the Deity: for he saith, *I will praise thee, O Lord, among the people: I will sing unto thee among the nations.*[2]

Again the beholder finds himself careering along a glowing tide of wonder and suggestiveness: awakening profound feelings in the Poet, the Historian, the Naturalist, the Philosopher, the Divine, as they ponder the multifarious constituents of the spectacle which is speaking myriad-tongued *to the attuned ear.*[3]—Anon he finds himself wandering among the living statuary, imaging the greatest characters that have appeared among men, in all nations, and in all times; and those incidents and fables which have most prominently arrested the attention, and challenged the admiration, of our species, in sacred and profane, in ancient and modern history, in truth and fable.[4]

At length a group is seen of the great poets,—Homer, Æschylus, Dante, Tasso, Milton, Shakespeare,—their lyres stilled while gazing at an object which has arrested the attention of them all. Æschylus is especially invoked, as author of the mystic and sublime fiction of the Chained Prometheus, who impiously *stole* the fire of Heaven to communicate it to mankind, contrary to the will of the Gods. The Poets are called to forget their own heroes and fables, to gaze on the transcendant object before them,—NEWTON, in the act of receiving, with majestic reverence and sublime humility, as a gracious *gift* from the hand of Omnipotence, the Key of the material universe—the sublime discovery of the law of gravitation. The bards remain silent with awe: and the lyre of Æschylus falls from his hand.

The Intellect of Man is here represented as being placed on the highest pinnacle of elevation: and the beholder sinks dazzled and exhausted by the contemplation. While inclined to indulge in enthusiastic pride and exultation at the vast intellectual powers with which Man is endowed, the current of his thoughts is wholly and suddenly changed: for he is drawn, by his unseen Mentor, to a distant spot in the Palace, where an insect—a BEE[5]—is beheld repairing one of his cells, with unerring skill, and according to those perfect geometrical principles, which it required the profoundest exercise of Man's faculties, for ages, to comprehend and appreciate! This tiny twin-brother of Sir Isaac Newton, is at work, repairing Architecture which he and his mystic race constructed—a little hive, within that vast one which human Engineers and Architects are so flushed with triumph in having devised and completed. His work is perfection: dare they pronounce theirs so?—At what is the beholder looking? At a small contemporary and co-tenant of the globe with man,—at an insect: whose heaven-implanted science led it at once to frame its hive of harmonious hexagons among the trees and flowers of Eden. The first of their

[1] P. 23. [2] Psalm cviii. 3. [3] P. 13. [4] Pp. 4. 26. [5] P. 28.

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little race winged its way from flower to flower, in the presence of Adam and Eve, before their fall, and shared the fortune of their descendants in the ark, and in all subsequent time; being still with us, after six thousand years of toil and slaughter by man![1] But while the Bees are thus indued with matchless science, and exercising their physical functions by means which we have striven in vain, from the days of Aristotle till now, to unravel, they exhibit yet more marvellous and inexplicable phenomena: for they are a completely organised State! with due gradations of rank, and a social economy carried on by agencies in confounding analogy to those of Man! Performing public and private acts, as man does, and apparently with similar ends in view: they have a Queen, and royal family, vigilantly guarded and affectionately tended: living in a Royal Palace: they have sentinels, and elaborate fortifications against invaders: they have idlers, working classes, thieves, police: colonies and marauding expeditions: sieges, battles: civil wars: massacres![2]

Profoundly meditating on all these, the beholder asks questions which no mortal has been yet able, and may be never able to answer, concerning the economy of the Bee, and the objects of its existence. Becoming more and more perplexed, he is disposed to dogmatise, and impatiently pronounce the Bee only an organised *compages* of atoms: a mere mimic of reason and intelligence,[3] having no moral capacity, no Past, no Future:—and the observer is beginning to assert the existence of a vast distinction between the Bee and himself, that between Instinct and Reason, when the suggestion suddenly occurs to him, that he himself may be, at that moment, the subject of similar speculation to some Superhuman Intelligence in the Heavens, regarding mankind as a curious race of insects, doing everything by an irresistible and unaccountable agency, and apparently attaching immense importance to our doings! He sees, with amused curiosity, our magnificent fleets, armies, and fights by Sea and Land, our soldiers and sailors being to his eye merely red and blue insects: and finds at length that we *record* our actions and discoveries: and imagine that we have a knowledge of the Heavenly bodies, and their motions! He, in his turn, regards us as mere machines finely organised, only mimicking intelligence: destitute of intellectual and moral capacity, and shut out from all knowledge of God: considering that we have built the crystal hive in which he sees us, without knowing why, and can derive no lesson from it! The beholder feels that he is contemplating, in the Bee, a mystery exceedingly awful: why we can see no more into it than we do, and yet have been allowed to see so far, our common Maker has not thought fit to tell us: but He has vouchsafed us so much light as enables us to know Him, and serve Him, according to the conditions of a reasonable service: He has given us, as rational and moral creatures, a mission; as also an appropriate one to His other creature, the Bee: and the beholder, humbled amidst the concentrated splendour of human intellect on which he had been inclined to be vain-glorious, prays that though the mission of the Bee may be hidden from him, though restless inquisitive man may be perplexed by the only partially-disclosed energies and actions of other Existences, yet may he reverently discover his own duties, and so fulfil the high mission assigned him. That mission is then conveyed in the sublime language of Inspiration.—(Jer. ix. 23–24.)[4]

[1] P. 29. [2] P. 30. [3] P. 31. [4] P. 33.

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Thus the beholder, in his own splendid Palace, is unexpectedly introduced to the domains of an insect; to a veritable microcosm: whose tiny denizens have social and political institutions, like ourselves, and exhibit in action a science which taxes our own highest energies to become imperfectly acquainted with. Having gradually risen from one stage of intellectual splendour to another, the beholder has reached the most dazzling altitude ever attained by man, in the person of the devout Christian philosopher, Newton; from whom he is led to make an instantaneous descent to a Bee, the unconscious exponent of mystery and wonder, fraught with profound instruction, and incentives to faith, and humility.—Such is the Lesson taught by the mystic insect, to its mighty fellow-creature.

THE SECOND BOOK.

II. Midnight in the Crystal Palace![1] The glare of day has disappeared, and the myriad visitors have departed: Man that IS, has made way for Man that WAS: as though the tidings of this great Gathering of the extant members of the family, and the wondrous array of their doings, had reached the invisible world: whose denizens, as themselves concerned in the display of that to which their own acts, in past time, had contributed, and who have been allowed a moment back in time,[2] now gaze noiselessly, and awfully. They are indued with the power of discovering inanimate objects, but are not aware of the presence of the Poet; who stands, a Man in time, surrounded by Man from eternity.[3] They wander amazedly about this Epitome of the world, its inhabitants and their doings, and its present condition!

Foremost among the spectral throng are seen those most likely to be affected by the assemblage of the Nations,—Kings, Conquerors, Legislators. Conspicuous among them are Alexander, Cæsar, Charlemagne, Alfred, and Napoleon, thinking of their fortunes on earth, and the motives and objects which then influenced them. The first sighs as he gazes on the Sutlej,[4] recently the scene of such great events, but to him the hated and humiliating limit of his Eastern progress. These great personages become gradually aware of the changes which have occurred since their respective days of authority and triumph: observing Power occupying new seats; novel modes of warfare; changed Dynasties. Alfred is beheld lost in pious astonishment at the extent of empire now ruled by one of his descendants. But there is a great crowd of Kings and Conquerors also present, mortified at finding no trace of either their names or actions, existing upon earth; not having been rescued from oblivion, by the pen of genius!

A mightier cohort is presently seen approaching,—the Monarchs of MIND—Philosophers. Alexander, great as he was, the pupil of Aristotle, is represented as melting away[5] before that sublime presence: who gazes around him as though he were still sitting on the throne of philosophy, after the lapse of two thousand years: but his dominion is sternly challenged by Roger Bacon;[6] a third presently approaching, Lord Bacon, who subverted the throne of Aristotle, and, seizing his sceptre, transmitted it to his own successors for all time. This great philosophic genius is represented as throned in the Palace

[1] P. 34. [2] P. 50. [3] P. 35. [4] P. 35. [5] P. 37. [6] P. 37.

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teeming with the trophies of the Experimental Philosophy—trophies which he is seen exhibiting to Aristotle and Roger Bacon, who greet each other nobly [1] All three become aware of the vast progress made, since their time, in philosophy. The successors of Lord Bacon are then imagined passing in review before him, owning allegiance, by prosecuting science on his principles, by a rigorous adherence to experiment and observation: and they tell him of his realms extending ceaselessly everywhere: especially apprising him, and his ghostly supporters, of the wonders of geological science—pointing to a new Past, and shadowing a wondrous future.[2] The thoughts of Aristotle are imagined shaping themselves into the mighty wish, *O! had this day been mine!* Elsewhere is seen Archimedes, profoundly intent upon the machinery in noiseless motion before him—a motionless shadow, gazing at shadows moving: and tracing the operation of principles which he himself had developed, two thousand years before.

Collected round an Orrery in motion, before which, during the day, had been seen a group of children familiar with its teaching, and telling it trippingly to one another, are seen ancient Astronomers, Chaldean, Egyptian, and Grecian, perceiving their respective systems subverted by that which the motion of the Orrery is illustrating: and among them Aristotle, who, with Thales, Phythagoras, Anaxagoras, and many others, stands lost in mournful wonder, at the revolution in Astronomical Science which they witness: But the observer owns the intellectual greatness of these ancient sages, wise according to the light they had, and gazes on them reverentially.

The rapid progress of Astronomical Science is then traced down to the day of Galileo, whose wretched Apostacy from Heaven-taught truth, through the fear of man, is denounced sorrowfully and indignantly: and the ancient Astronomers are represented as confounded by the revelations of Galileo's telescope. Their great successors are then introduced: Newton being seen towering above them all, and sublimely indicating the recently-discovered truths, which he had been instrumental in discovering. As he proceeds, his countenance is overshadowed with gloom: for he sees approaching the spirit of his Godless successor and commentator, La Place; who is now, however, confuted by the revelations of Eternity, and stands meekly and repentant behind his mighty master; who leads the great ones around him higher and higher into the heavens, pointing out system circling system after system, till all are beheld circling the central glory, the seat of Deity:[3] where sits One who stooped to the earth to redeem mankind, and will hereafter return to be their judge. Thus in these shadow-peopled realms, the mind is fixed on Man, his Doings, and Destiny, his relations to man, and to his Maker, his past and future: and the present is overshadowed with the final Gathering.

Newton is presently seen approaching Socrates and Plato; who are conversing with Butler, the great Christian Divine and Philosopher of modern days: all three of whom had dedicated their lives to the love and search after truth. The subjects of their converse are—Truth, Mind, Immortality, and Deity: and the two Pagan Philosophers are listening to the Christian's exposition of revealed truth, 'with brightening countenance!'[4] Butler exclaims of each, 'Thou wast not far away.'[5] Here it is designed to indicate the dim glimmer-

[1] P. 37. [2] P. 38. [3] P. 41. [4] P. 41. [5] P. 42.

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ing of revealed truth, through the mists of tradition, exhibited by the teaching of Socrates and Plato: and the passage is written chiefly for those familiar with the tender and sublime account given by Plato of the death of Socrates, and his last discourse on the Immortality of the Soul.[1] Only faint echoes of this converse are heard; being heavenly melodies, fit for immortality and eternity only:[2] but an awful question is asked, to indicate the nature of it.[3]

This vision disappears, and the beholder enters the misty regions of Mythology: in the midst of which is seen Æschylus standing, in forlorn grandeur, before the image of his own Chained Prometheus. The mighty Poet's lyre is lying with broken strings at his feet; but suddenly there comes a glitter in his eye, showing a half-awakened consciousness that he has been dealing with the fragments of primeval truths, the ancient but obscured knowledge of the wrath of God with Man, for Sin, and of the destined sufferings of the Divine Mediator, by which alone that wrath could be appeased.[4] This passage is addressed to those who have read and thought of the Prometheus Bound, as a Grecian myth of the Fall of Man. This is conceived to be the middle point between Truth and Fable; or rather Truth refracted through the accumulating indistinctness and error of Tradition: and the beholder is represented as suddenly guided through past time, towards the source of primeval Truth, which becomes more and more vividly distinct, as he passes on his awful flight towards the revealed origin of man, and of all things. The 'clouds disperse, the shadows fly,' while events, scenes, and persons are successively appearing, as recorded in the Volume of Inspiration. At length is reached the primeval fratricide, Cain: the man first born of woman, upon the Earth, and who stained that Earth with the blood of the second. Cain, the Prince of his bloody race, appears standing tortured, amid a haze crimsoned with his crime, surrounded by a hideous throng of his blood-stained descendants.[5]

Passing beyond this scene of horror, the bewildered traveller through past time suddenly stands, dissolved in tenderness and awe, before Adam and Eve, just driven guilty and terror-stricken out of Eden.[6]

Having thus seen the Past, the Present, and the Future of Man, indissolubly linked together, and respectively reflecting each other, the beholder is suddenly recalled to the earthly scene of his vision, and the objects which had occasioned it, under the guidance of his unseen guardian. The splendours which dazzled those thronging it by day, have no attraction for the eyes seeing through a spiritual medium: but the former are apostrophised, and asked whether their eyes had been satiated with the material splendours which had presented themselves: Had they seen nothing but gems, gold, and jewels? Had they not perceived the spectacle fraught with a Divine lesson, speaking through the eyes, to the awakened soul? Then a GEM infinitely transcending all, had lain unseen!—WISDOM, *the wisdom which cometh from above:* for it is not Wisdom, merely to collect the bright but perishing things of time and sense, to gaze at them wistfully, with curiosity, exultation, and pride. A sublime voice is heard, both asking and answering the question, WHERE SHALL WISDOM BE FOUND?—a voice[7] reverently recognised by the assembled spirits—

[1] Phædo. [2] P. 42. [3] P. 42. [4] P. 42. [5] P. 43. [6] Pp. 43, 44. [7] P. 47.

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And unto Man, He said,
The fear of the Lord, that is Wisdom,
And to depart from evil, is understanding.

This language of Inspiration attracts the beholder to the spot where lies the Holy Volume[1] enshrining it, represented as radiating light. While standing before it, a great moral problem[2] is suggested to his mind. Dark and deadly doubts and misgivings at length begin to crowd upon him; and apparently deserted by his guardian angel, he gradually sinks deeper and deeper into a black abyss of scepticism, and despair: but his heavenly attendant reappears: and by an illuminating act of Faith, he rises to a sense of Scriptural light, and peace. He then humbly asks whether the impious Scoffer has, from time to time, stood before the Holy Volume, despising it as a collection of fables alike derogatory to the dignity of human intellect, and inconsistent with the goodness, wisdom, and justice of God: and utters a prayer that the eyes of any such may be opened, to see Truth in Hallowed Mystery; and becoming a *child of light*, walk thenceforth in The Light.

The vision is at length drawing to a close:[3] the spiritual crowd is dissolving away—vanishing shadows, within a shadow vanishing—as though obedient to a mysterious summons, unheard by the mortal beholder.[4] There is a noiseless confusion: forms are intermingling, but in dread silence: and then the solitary earthly tenant of the Palace is once more ALONE, with the chill of Eternity on his soul.

It is NOW EARLY MORN. The rosy rays of the splendid SUN, approaching, are faintly beaming on the Crystal Solitude, and melting away the shades of night: gradually revealing the myriad splendours visible during the day, but making the beholder's solitary condition only the more oppressive. Yielding to the impulse of his social nature, he yearns for intercourse with his fellow-tenants of the Earth; and has a mournful sense of his own fleeting precarious tenure of life; passing away like a shadow, as had done those whose mysterious presence he has just lost. A sense of the vastness and awfulness of the visible and invisible economy of God, has overwhelmed him: he feels deserted in the stupendous creation; as though he himself were neglected, and unworthy of Almighty notice or protection; desolate, and unable to realise any personal relations with his Maker. At the moment when he feels perishing from a sense of insignificance, he hears the chirping of a sparrow, itself the most insignificant tenant of the air—not a farthing's worth:[5] but he remembers with reverence, that God himself declared that *not one of* even *them was forgotten before Him*, and vouchsafed to say to Man, *even the very hairs of your head are numbered. Fear not, therefore! ye are of more value than many sparrows!* Even that poor tenant of the air is now invested with interest, as his fellow-creature, and cared for by their common Creator: with whom, however, the beholder dreads to feel himself alone—with THE PURE, Impurity! His spirit droops with a sense of unworthiness of the favour of God: he relapses into despondency and gloom; knowing that he is but as *a flower of the field:* which disappears, even with the wind going over it.

It is at this moment that the attendant Spirit benignantly performs her

[1] Pp. 47, 48. [2] P. 48. [3] P. 50. [4] P. 50.
[5] Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings?—Matt. xii. 9.

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final office of love. Recalling him from his wanderings over the Universe of God's creation, she directs his eye to a solitary object,—a Lily. He sees in it, at first, a mere neglected field-flower; a stray intruder upon the splendid province of her delicately tended sisterhood:[1] but, influenced by his departing attendant, he suddenly detects in it an awakening and sublime significance. He first sees in the Lily, as his thoughts expand, the representative of NATURE, appearing in simple majesty, in the very Palace of ART: God's handiwork, amongst the handiwork of man; eclipsing all the varied richness and magnificence surrounding it. Here, both Man, and his greatest doings, are reduced to instant nothingness, before his Almighty Maker!

The pride of intellect has thus been gently rebuked and humbled, alike by an Insect, and a Flower: and as the approaching sun is rapidly restoring visible splendour to the accumulated trophies of Man's power, he himself bows down amidst them, with adoration, at the footstool of OMNIPOTENCE. He remembers that the incarnate God himself expressly declared, that the highest triumphs of Art, typified by the glory of Solomon, were as nothing, in comparison with this Lily! His humbled faculties rise now to the contemplation of Almighty power: if the mere Flower of the Field be really so glorious, what must be the glory of Creation, as Man may, hereafter, be permitted to see it?

But beyond all this, the divinely-selected Flower is fraught with still profounder interest. By it, *One dead yet speaketh*, tenderly, to the distrustful and troubled hearts of his creatures: assuring them that their wants, their sufferings, their sorrows, are all known to Him, and that He will provide for them: and finally, commanding them, *Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness: and all these things shall be added unto you.*[2]

Then the Lily is taken with reverence into the hand of him whom it has taught so sublime a lesson from on high; and the Poem ends with the spectacle of a SON, gazing, in the Lily, on a blooming emblem of the Power and Love of an Almighty FATHER.

LET THE WORDS OF MY MOUTH, AND THE MEDITATION OF MY HEART, BE ALWAY ACCEPTABLE IN THY SIGHT, O LORD, MY STRENGTH, AND MY REDEEMER.[3]

[1] P. 52. [2] Matt. vi. 33. [3] Psalm xix. 14, 15.

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PREFACE TO THE ORIGINAL EDITION.

In the South Transept of the Crystal Palace, already vanishing from before our eyes, may be seen, for a little while longer, twin figures of the youthful Alfred the Great, and his Mother; who is giving him the Book of Saxon poetry, which she had promised to him, among her sons, who should soonest learn to read it. Historians record, that Alfred was passionately fond of the Saxon poems, listening to them eagerly by day, and by night; and that as he listened, the first aspirings of a soaring mind seem to have arisen within him. He treasured the poems in his memory; and, during the whole of his life, poetry continued to be his solace and amusement, in trouble and care.

In this Volume will be found a precious relic, which, it is thought, few persons will contemplate unmoved, of the illustrious Monarch's genius; and some of what follows, it has been attempted to fashion on that exquisite model. It seemed to a loyal Englishman, that in this there was a certain appropriateness. The name of Alfred is very dear to us;[1] and it is equally affecting and suggestive to imagine, doubtless consistently with the fact, the Royal Mother and Son of 1851, gazing at the sculptured images of the Royal Mother and Son of a thousand years ago: with the royal Father standing by, to whom the world stands largely indebted, for the transcendent and profoundly instructive spectacle which they have assembled to witness.

In offering to the public this record of impressions which can never be effaced from the mind and heart of its Author, that instructed Public is approached with deep solicitude; but he ventures to indulge the hope, that by one who may think proper to peruse this Volume deliberately, suspending his judgment till the completion of the perusal, both the Lily, and the Bee may be then found speaking with some significance.

Inner Temple, *September* 1851.

[1] He was called, in the old time, 'Shepherd of his People,' the 'Darling of the English!' —It was his own mother, Osburga, and not, as some historians assert, his French stepmother, who showed to him and his brothers the volume of Anglo-Saxon poetry, saying, 'He who first can read the book shall have it.'—See Sir Francis Palgrave's *History of England, Anglo-Saxon Period*, p. 161.

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THE

LILY AND THE BEE.

BOOK THE FIRST.

Four thousand years ago, said The Voice,[1] the whole Family of man was gathered together on the plain of Shinar.

They spoke often, in one language,[2] of the awful Deluge which had happened but a century before; and pointed out, one to another, the traces of it, still everywhere visible.

Those who had been in the Ark, would start from their sleep! as in dreams they heard the roar of the Waters, and again beheld their desolate expanse.

Yet was the dread lesson lost upon the ungrateful and presumptuous hearts of those who had not been whelmed beneath the waters.

Minded to dishonour Him who had spared them, while destroying their fellows, and to frustrate His all-wise purposes, they would build a City, and a Tower whose top might reach unto Heaven, and prevent their being scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth.[3]

Then was precipitated upon them the event which they had sought to avert.

Their labours were interrupted from on high; their language was suddenly confounded;

And they were scattered abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth, bearing about with them, even until now, the badge of their punishment and humiliation.

Sixteen hundred years afterwards, near the scene of that impiety and folly, occurred a great gathering of the self-same Family, in the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon, at the bidding of a mighty monarch.

There he had gathered together the princes, the governors, and the captains, the judges, the treasurers, and the councillors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces, and all the People, Nations, and Languages.

[1] This is supposed to be the Voice of an Attendant Spirit.

[2] "The higher we ascend in history," says that accomplished antiquarian, Sir Francis Palgrave, "the more apparent are the traces of that unity which subsisted, when we were all of one language and of one speech (Gen. xv. 1,) in the plain of Shinar."—*History of the Anglo-Saxons*, Book I. c. 1.

[3] This Babylonish Tower, says the philosophic Schlegel, has been, in every age, a figure of the Heaven-aspiring edifice of lordly Arrogance; which is, sooner or later, sure to be struck down, and scattered afar, by the arm of the divine Nemesis.

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In the midst of them glittered a golden image, which Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up, and had come forth to dedicate.

And a herald cried aloud, commanding all people, nations, and languages, that at what time they heard the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of music, they should, on pain of death, fall down and worship that golden image.

The impious despot was obeyed: the People, the Nations, and the Languages, bowed, in base idolatry, before the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the King had set up;

All but three noble youths,[1] worshippers of the God whom their Monarch was dishonouring, and who, in his rage and fury, cast them forthwith, but vainly, into a burning fiery furnace, saying, Who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands?

Two thousand four hundred years have since rolled on; and behold!

In this present year of our Lord, eighteen hundred and fifty-one, indicating the lustrous epoch from which Christian people now reverently reckon time,

In this little western Isle, unknown to the haughty Babylonian, whose place[2] has been swept with the besom of destruction, occurs another gathering of that self-same family: of all people, and nations, and languages, on a royal invitation, and for a royal Dedication.

A Christian Queen, on whose Empire setteth not the sun; who had read in holy writ of the plains of Shinar, and of Dura, went forth with her Consort and her Offspring, attended by her princes, her nobles, her statesmen, her warriors, her judges, her philosophers, amidst a mighty multitude:

Not impiously to dishonour the Deity, and attempt to thwart his purposes; not to inaugurate an idol, and to Dedicate an Image, impiously commanding it to be worshipped; but, in the hallowing presence of His ministers whom Nebuchadnezzar had dishonoured, to bow before HIM, THE LORD OF HEAVEN AND EARTH,

Who, from the place of His habitation, looketh down upon all the inhabitants of the earth, and understandeth all their works;

To offer humble adoration and thanksgiving for His mercies, marvellous and numberless, vouchsafed to herself, and to His people committed to her charge;

In Whom she ever hath affiance, seeking His honour and glory!

To cement, as far as in her lay, a universal brotherhood, and promote among all nations, unity, peace, and concord;

To recall great nations from the devastations of war, to the delights of peace;

To exhibit a mighty spectacle, equalled but by its spectators:

Humbling, elevating, expanding, solemnising the soul of every beholder capable of thought, purified with but even the faintest tincture of devoutness;

Speaking to great minds, to statesman, philosopher, divine, in accents sublime:

Telling of MAN, in his relations to the earth;

MAN, in his relations to men;

MAN, in his relations to GOD.

Yes, to a Palace, risen like an exhalation,[3] goes the Queen, mindless of predicted peril — standing within it, the dazzling centre of a nation's love and anxiety;

With stately serenity, beside her illustrious and philosophic Spouse, and illustrious offspring;

Her eyes reverently downcast, while one voice only sounds, humbly uttering prayer and praise[4]—*Not unto us,*

[1] See NOTE, No. I. — 'Why Daniel was not cast into the Fiery Furnace.'

[2] I will rise up against them, saith the Lord of Hosts—and cut off from Babylon the name.

I will also make it a possession for the bittern, and pools of water, and I will sweep it with the besom of destruction.

This is the rejoicing city, that dwelt carelessly; that said in her heart, I am, and there is none besides me: how is she become a desolation!—Isaiah xiv. 22, 23; Zeph., ii. 15.

[3] MILTON'S *Paradise Lost*, Book I.

[4] Now therefore, O God, we thank Thee; we praise Thee; and entreat Thee so to overrule this assembly of many nations, that it

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not unto us, but unto thy name be all the glory!—

Amidst all that is lovely, great, and pious, from all lands; whose eyes are moistened, whose hearts are swelling:

Anon peals forth, in solemn harmony, Hallelujah!

There stand members of the scattered family of Man:

Come from East, come from West; come from North, come from South; from the Old World, from the New:

And, glittering all around, are trophies of industry and peace from every land, wafted over vast oceans:

Results of Toil grown skilful, after six thousand years.

—Then hie thee to that Palace, said The Voice:

Mingle among thy fellows, unheeded by the gay and great.

Be thou but reverently humble, and I will be with thee, One Unseen, yet seeing all: what I will show, the self-sufficient spirit shall never see;

Being with quickest sensuous eye, quite blind; yet, all the while, before a mystic mirror, brightly reflecting the Past, darkly the Future.

But thou, unnoticed one! perchance despised—behold! ponder!

Hie thee! haste! it vanisheth.

It vanisheth! and melts into the Past.

* * * *

There was standing without the Crystal Palace, in a pauper dress, a grey-haired harmless idiot, gazing at the vast structure, vacantly. Gently arresting me as I passed, he pointed with eager, gleeful mystery, uttering incoherent sounds, to the door which he was not permitted to enter.[1]

Poor soul! said The Voice, mournfully, this banquet is not spread for *thee!*

I left him without, gibbering to a pitying sentinel, and entered with a spirit saddened, but thankful.

——DAY, IN THE CRYSTAL PALACE!

Music echoing through the transparent fabric!

Fragrant flowers and graceful shrubs blooming, and exhaling sweet odours!

Fountains flashing and sparkling in the subdued sunlight!

In living sculpture, behold the Grand, the Grotesque, the Terrible, the Beautiful!

Every form and colour imaginable, far as the eye can reach, dazzlingly intermingled!

And lo! seventy thousand sons and daughters of Adam, passing and repassing, ceaselessly:

Bewildered, charmingly!

Gliding amidst bannered Nations—through country after country, renowned in ancient name, and great in modern: civilised and savage.

From the far East, and West, misty in distance, faintly echo martial strains, and the solemn anthem!——

The Soul, approached through its highest senses, is flooded with excitement; all its faculties appealed to at once, it sinks, for a while, exhausted, overwhelmed.

Who can describe this astounding spectacle?

Lost in a sense of what it is, who can think what it is like?

Philosopher and poet are alike agitated, and silent!

Gaze whithersoever they may, all is marvellous and affecting:

Stirring new thoughts and emotions, and awakening oldest memories and associations—

PAST, PRESENT, FUTURE, linked together mystically, each imaging the other, kindling faint suggestion, with sudden startle!——

And where stand they?

Scarce nine times had the moon

Performed her silent journey round the earth,

Since grass grew, refreshed with dew and zephyr, upon the spot on which is now glistening a crystal palace, then not even imaged in the mind of its architect,—

may tend to the advancement of Thy glory, to the diffusion of Thy holy Word, and to the increase of general prosperity, by producing peace and goodwill among the different races of mankind.—From the *Prayer of the Archbishop of Canterbury*, in the Crystal Palace, which opened on the 1st May 1851, and closed on the 11th October 1851.

[1] The oppressive incident above related actually occurred to the author; producing an impression never to be effaced.

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Now teeming with things rich and rare, from well-nigh every spot of earth on the terraqueous globe,

Telling, oh! grand and overwhelming thought! of the uttermost industry and intellect of MAN, in every clime, of every hue, of every speech, since his Almighty Maker placed him upon the earth!

MAN, made in His own image, after His likeness, a little lower than the angels, and crowned with glory and honour;

Given dominion over all the earth and sea, and all that are in them, and in the air,—that move, and are:

Telling of MAN, ever since the holy calm and rest of the first Sabbath: since the dark hour in which he was driven, disobedient and woe-stricken, out of Eden,

Doomed, in the sweat of his face to eat bread, in sorrow, all the days of his life, till he returned into the ground, cursed for his sake:

The dread sentence echoing in his ears, Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return!

O spirit, convey me, awhile, from this scene of mystery,

This so restless sea of my fellow-beings!

Let me alone, apart, meditate humbly, reverently!

——Sixty centuries are sweeping past me!

Their sound is in my ear, their dread is on my soul!

The air! the dust! is instinct with LIFE, the life of man!

Speaking to the soul, of all the hopes, and fears, the agonies, delights,

The woes, and cares, that have agitated the countless millions, my fellows, descended from our fallen Father, the First Adam, and like him returned to the dust:

Whither I, and all his sons, my brethren, strangers! and sojourners! as all our fathers were! are journeying fast.

O, spare me a little, before I go hence, and be no more seen!

—I faintly breathe an air, spiritual and rare;

Mind all around diffused!

MAN rises before me, everywhere, man!

In his manifestation and misfortune, multiform; mysterious in his doings and his destiny!

And, I, poor Being! trembling and amazed, am also man;

Part of that mighty UNITY;

One, but one! still one! of that vast family to whom belongs the earth;[1] still holding, albeit unworthily, our charter of lordship.

Tremble, child of the dust! remembering from Whom came that charter, well-nigh forfeited. Tremble! stand in awe!

Yet hope; for He knoweth thy frame; He remembereth that thou art but dust; and, like as a father pitieth his own children, even so is merciful unto them *that fear Him!*

Return, with lightened heart, with cheerful look, said The Voice, benignantly,

And read a scroll, suddenly unrolled, of the doings of thy wondrous, wayward race, upon the earth!

Again within the Nave —— all bright! all beautiful!—

Hail! Welcome! BRETHREN, SISTERS all!

Come hither trustfully, from every land and clime!

All hail! ye loveliest! bravest! wisest! best!

Of every degree! complexion! speech!

One and the self-same blood in all our veins![2] Our hearts, fashioned alike!

Alike feeling, loving, admiring: with the same senses and faculties perceiving and judging what the same energies have produced!

Stay! Has my ear, suddenly quickened, penetrated to the primeval language, through all its variations, since the scattering and confusion of Shinar!

[1] All the whole heavens, are the Lord's: the earth hath He given to the children of men.—Psalm cxv. 16.

[2] God, that made the world, and all things therein, hath made of one blood all nations of men, for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the bounds of their habitation, and is not far from every one of us.—Acts, xvii. 24-27.

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O rare unity in multiplicity, uniformity in endless variety!

Yonder comes THE QUEEN!

Nor hideous shot, nor shell, tears open a crimson path,

But one is melting before her,—melting with love and loyalty.

All unguarded!

No nodding plume, nor sabre gleaming, to startle or appal: she moves midst myriads—silent myriads:

Unheard by her their voice, but not unfelt their thoughts,

Fondly flowing while she passes by:

——O, all from foreign lands! uncovered be awhile!

Behold a solemn sight:

A nation's heart in prayer!

And hear their prayer,

GOD SAVE THE QUEEN!

And God save thee, too, wise and pious Prince, Her Spouse!

Well may thine eye look round well pleased,

And with a modest dignity,

Upon a scene designed by thee:

Sprung into being under thy princely fostering;

An enterprise right royal! nobler far than ever Prince before accomplished:

All bloody feats of war eclipsed, by this of Peace, all-potent peace.

O glorious war to wage: Science and Truth, with Error, Ignorance, and Prejudice——lying all prostrate here: vanquished: O would it were, to rise no more!

And thou here, too, young PRINCE, their first-born son: thou hope of England: future King!

God bless thee, Prince: God grant thee many many years, wherein to learn, by bright example, how to wear a crown, and sway a sceptre.

Look well around thee: think of Her whose hand is holding thine!

Mark thou its marvels,—Read its LESSON, well!

Illustrious Three, our hearts yearn, seeing you stand before the image of your ancestor, oh Queen! Alfred: the Great: the Good: the Wise.

What thoughts are yours, while gazing at the glorious pair, Mother and Son?

Young Prince! look well on that young Prince: remember: resemble! In your veins runs his rich blood!

Methinks I see the Queen look grave,

While passing slowly down the wondrous nave.

Flag after flag hangs over her,

Emblems of Nations, great and glorious some, all friendly!

All here, receiving Queenly, Princely welcome: therein, the Nation's.

The very Genius of each State is here!

Beauteous, but timid—trembling, as though affrighted with recent sounds and sights of blood and tumult: even here, scarce reassured!

But, gentle ones! breathe freely HERE!

As ye have left behind your vesture darkened, it may be, and crimson-spotted, and donned attire so gay and graceful, so vanish fear from your lovely countenances!

In your own Sister's Palace, away with terror and distrust!

Start not, as though your ears yet caught frightful sounds of cries! and musketry! of shot, and shell! See here, all peace and love!

Britannia passes by: she greets you fondly; embracing with a sister's tenderness.

Where is The Queen? In SPAIN! and yet, within her own dominions!

She is standing on the dizzy height of Gibraltar, impregnable, tremendous;

And tranquilly surveying the kingdoms of two sister Queens, in East and West: herself on British ground, won by British valour, and so retained, and guarded.

Then does she muse of Tubal's progeny?[1] Of dynasties long passed away—Phœnician, Carthagenian, Roman sway: of Vandal, Goth, and Saracen: Crescent and Cross.

Sees she the passes where glittered the standards of Charlemagne, and

[1] The original settlers in Spain are supposed to have been the progeny of Tubal, the fifth son of Japheth.

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echo in her ears the bugles of Roncesvalles?

Thinks she of mighty ones gone by —all, all, but one: of Hannibal: of Scipio: Pompey: Cæsar: Napoleon: her own Wellington[1]——

And sadly looks on hill, and vale, and stream,

Crimsoned with Spanish, French, and British blood:

Sees she myriad bayonets, bristling everywhere, and flashing sabres;

And hears the deadly volley rolling, and thunder of artillery—

Vimeira!

Torres Vedras!

Corunna!

Talavera!

Salamanca!

Vittoria!

Trafalgar!

——FRANCE! noble, sensitive!

Our ancient rival, now our proudly-splendid, emulous friend![2]

Our Queen in gallant France! But with no fear, ye chivalrous!

Behold the royal Lady, who, scarcely seated on her throne,

Quickly responded to your grand request,

Giving you back your glorious DEAD,

Then, after life's fitful[3] fever sleeping well, in her domain, in ocean far away;

And now upon your soil, his own loved France, sleepeth NAPOLEON!

—His ear heard not the wailing peal, thrilling through the o'ercharged hearts of his mourning veterans:

Nor did he hear the mingled thunderings of our artillery, yours, and our own,

In blended solemn friendliness,[4]

Honouring his mighty memory.

Ye, Frenchmen, saw, and heard,

Weeping nobly 'mid the melting melody:[5] and we were looking on, with throbbing heart.

See then, our Queen! She wears a crown, and holds a sceptre: emblem of majesty, of power, of love, alone!—

See, see, embodied to your sight!

England's dear Epitome,

And radiant Representative!

All hearts in hers; and hers, in all:

Britain, Britannia: Bright Victoria, all!—

—A sadness on her brow! thinking, perchance, of royal exiles,[6] sheltered in her realm:

It may be of a captive,[7] too, in yours: he no Jugurtha! brave: honourable: noble: broken-hearted—— oh! French—ye proud and generous——

Passed into BELGIUM, fair and gay—
Yonder the plain of Waterloo.

[1] Like their great predecessors in the wars of Rome and Carthage, these two illustrious chiefs rolled the chariot of victory over its surface, and, missing each other, severally conquered every other opponent, till their own renown filled the world, and Europe, in breathless suspense, awaited the issue of their conflict on another shore. — ALISON, vol. viii. p. 397.

[2] And since become our ally, in the great and just war against Russia, [1854.]

[3] *Macbeth*, Act III. scene 2.

[4] Le gouvernement de sa Majesté espère que l'empressement, qu'il met à répondre à cette demande, sera considéré en France comme une preuve du désir de sa Majesté d'effacer jusqu'à la dernière trace de ces animosités nationales qui, pendant la vie de l'Empereur, avaient poussé les deux nations à la guerre. Le gouvernement de sa Majesté espère que de pareils sentimens, s'ils existaient encore, seraient ensevelis à jamais, dans le tombeau destiné à recevoir les restes mortels de Napoléon. — *Despatch of* LORD PALMERSTON, 9th May, 1840. These are words, justly remarks the historian, of dignified generosity, worthy of the chivalrous days of a great nation. — ALISON, vol. xiv. p. 198.

[5] This points to one of the grandest and most affecting incidents in the history of France and England. In the year 1840 the French government requested the English to give the French the remains of their great Emperor: a request which was acceded to with dignified promptness. When the coffin was opened, the countenance of Napoleon was exhibited serene and undecayed, exciting profound emotions in those who beheld it. The British naval and military forces at St Helena vied with the French in honouring the mighty dead. The remains were re-interred with great solemnity and splendour, on the 15th December 1840, in the Church of the Invalides.

[6] Louis Philippe and his family, who escaped from Paris on the 24th February 1848. He died here on the 26th August 1850.

[7] An allusion to Abd-el-Kader; who was shortly afterwards liberated by the present Emperor of the French, in a graceful and noble spirit.

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Her cheek is flushed: anon grows sad.
There approaches a mourner, a royal mourner.[1] His air is serene, but sorrowful: his cheek is wasted; and his eye tells of a sorely smitten heart.
His hand yet feels the pressure of those lilied fingers which clasped it fondly, gently, at last unconsciously:
And he sees still those eyes which gazed upon him tenderly, even through the shadows of death!

In busy sea-dyked HOLLAND now:—
Methinks she tells her son of a New Holland—
A fifth continent,[2] in a distant ocean, fourteen thousand miles away: ruled by her sceptre!
And now, grown grave, she whispers of an era, and a Prince, great, glorious, of immortal memory.[3]

In HANOVER a while—
Sadly speaking of a royal Cousin, who, were he in the Crystal Palace, could see naught of its splendours; destined yet to rule a kingdom![4]

Lingering in SAXONY!
Telling of LUTHER to her son:
Methinks she sees the giant spirit standing defiant, before Imperial Diet: scornfully burning Papal Bull:—
Kindling the flame which man shall never quench[5]——
Protected by a Prince potent and pious,—as Wickliffe, here, by her own Royal progenitor of Lancaster!
And then she points her son, in proud silence, to his Father's home, ancient, illustrious, and firm in Faith.—

SWITZERLAND!
Bright, breezy Switzerland!
Land of the beautiful, land of the free!
With mountains majestic!
Wearing snowy coronets, dazzling, all of rosy hue—
And lovely spreading vales, studded with cottages all blossom-hid—
With deep blue waters, imaging bluer skies.
——Oh, awful in avalanche! on whose dread verge
Bloom roses and myrtles, unchilled,[6] unscared.
O foaming flashing cataract, and fearful precipice!
Where glances the gleeful, scarce-seen chamois, safe from fell eye of hunter!
O happy, happy Switzerland!
Where meet the Seasons in concord strange,
And gaily dance, with melting eye yet tremulous limb,
'Mid ice, and fruits, and snow, and flowers,
While zephyr, scent-laden, plays gaily round!
Our Queen in Switzerland!—forgetting state and splendour awhile,
Softly to sink into enchanting solitude.
O land of the free, the pious, and brave—
Of Tell and Zwingle!
A Queen of the free and the fearless is breathing your balmy air—
But quick to return to her own sweet sceptred isle.

GREECE—Greece! The Queen in Greece! And thinking of the radiant past!—
Of Marathon and Salamis! of wisdom, eloquence, and song—
All silenced now!—
The Oracles are dumb.
No voice or hideous hum,
Runs through the arched roof, in words deceiving:
Apollo from his shrine

[1] The King of the Belgians, who had shortly before lost his queen, a fond and lovely woman.

[2] New Holland contains an area of 3,360,000 square miles—*i. e.* more than *twenty-eight* times the area of Great Britain and Ireland!

[3] By the sagacity and energy of that great man, William III., was closed the bloody struggle for civil and religious liberty which had so long been convulsing this country, and there were secured to us the inestimable advantages of our constitution, and of our Protestant faith.—PRINCE ALBERT, at St Martin's Hall, 17th June 1851.

[4] The present King of Hanover, who is blind, ascended the throne on the 18th Nov. 1851.

[5] I know and am certain, said this wonderful man, that Jesus Christ our Lord lives and reigns; and, buoyant in this knowledge and confidence, I will not fear a hundred thousand Popes.

[6] See the vivid sketch given by Sir A. Alison, in his History of Europe, Chapter 25.

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Can no more divine,
With hollow shriek the steep of Delphos leaving.[1]
What fates were hers, since Japheth's son set foot upon her soil—
Javan, to Otho![2]—
Marathon, to Navarino!——
And now, amid the isles
Where burning Sappho loved and sung,[3]
Gliding o'er Ionian waters,
Mellow sunlight all around,
And gently thinking of the days gone by——
PROTECTRIX ——

England in Greece—in Christian Greece!
Victoria there! But not in warlike[4] form: only,
Lover of peace, and balanced rule.

In dusky, rainless EGYPT now!
Mysterious memories come crowding round—
From misty Mizraim[5] to Ibrahim—
Abraham! Joseph! Pharaoh's Plagues! Shepherd Kings! Sesostris!
Cambyses! Xerxes! Alexander! Ptolemies! Antony! Cleopatra! Cæsar—
Isis! Osiris! Temples! Sphinxes! Obelisks!
Alexandria!
The Pyramids!
The Nile!
NAPOLEON![6] NELSON!
—Behold, my son, quoth the Royal Mother, this ancient wondrous country—destined scene of mighty doings—perchance of conflict, deadly, tremendous, such as the world has never seen, nor warrior dreamed of.
Even now, the attracting centre of world-wide anxieties.
On this spot see settled the eyes of sleepless Statesmen——
Lo! a British engineer, even while I speak, connects the Red Sea with the Mediterranean: Alexandria and Cairo made as one——
Behold Napoleon, deeply intent on the great project!
See him, while the tide of the Red Sea is out, on the self-same site traversed three thousand years before, by the children of Israel!
He drinks at the Wells of Moses, at the foot of Mount Sinai:
He returns, and so the tide: The shades of night approach: behold the hero, just whelmed beneath the waters—even like the ancient Pharaoh——
Had such event been willed on high![7]——

In TUNIS! All simple, rough, barbaric! Art *thou* sole representative of Carthage, and her ancient glory?[8]
And thinks our Queen suddenly of the Tyrian Queen, and her resplendent city,
Rome's rival in the empire of the world—
Carthage and her state, whose policy the Stagyrite approved:
A people wise, grave, powerful;
Sending forth colonies; with distant islands trafficking; even with this isle of ours; with England, and with France!
Muses our sighing Queen, of Rome and Carthage;
Rival Queens; competitors for empire;
Ambitious; of deadly hate;
Of treacheries and perfidies;
Of sieges; battles; seas of blood;
Of noble Hannibal; great Scipio; fell Cato?

[1] These magnificent and well-known lines in Milton's Hymn on the Nativity, were supposed by one of the accomplished critics of the *Lily and the Bee*, in a Journal which appeared on the 5th November 1851, to be the author's—and were consequently thus spoken of, after being quoted with a contemptuous prelude:
"The reader will doubtless perceive *a sort of barbarous rhyme here* running through the Royal meditations, extremely appropriate to the theme!"

[2] The first inhabitants of Greece are believed to have been the progeny of Javan, the fourth son of Japheth: that of his sixth son, Meshech, formed the aborigines of Italy.

[3] Lord Byron.

[4] Alas, how altered now! [1854.]

[5] Mizraim, the son of Ham, and grandson of Noah, was the first of the Pharaohs.

[6] See NOTE, No. II.—'Napoleon and Leibnitz on Egypt.'

[7] See NOTE, No. III.—'The Modern Pharaoh in the Red Sea.'

[8] Tunis is within only a few miles' distance of the site of ancient Carthage.

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Tunis! wast thou scared by the fearful fires consuming Carthage?
Didst thou see the flame and hear the shrieks?[1]
And hear the withering curse, see Scipio's pitying tears, and listen to his mournful prophecy,
Of fate reserved for bloody and perfidious Rome?
And Rome, triumphant in her joy and pride,
Exulting over her fallen rival! crushed! all traces from the earth razed ruthlessly;
And curse pronounced on all who should rebuild, or her hated memory revive—
Where art THOU, Rome? Still lingering on the earth? Rome! Carthage!—
Where all your idle strifes, your guilty jealousies!

Thou, too, old Tunis, hast seen vicissitude!
Solomon the Magnificent! Selim! The Emperor!
Thou sawest ten thousand[2] Christian slaves set glorious free!
Hast thou forgotten Blake[3]—crumbling thy castles with his cannonade?

TURKEY!—
Beautiful Constantinople!
Well may Queenly eye rest upon thee rapturously.
Enchanting City, hail!
Ever bathed in ocean's breeze!
Thy terraced heights, all emerald-hued,
Rising successive from the blue waves to the sky!
Thy glistening domes, mosques, minarets!
Thy lovely waters, studded by snowy sails of boat and bark!
Queen of the East, on seven-hilled throne!
Thou passionately wooed of monarchs and conquerors!
The Macedonian! Napoleon! Muscovite! All hail!
A peaceful Queen is looking at thee now,
Nor dreams of conquest![4]

CHINA![5]—Awoke from centuries' celestial slumber,
By the thunder of our guns.——
Barbarian Queen! what dost thou there?
There, also, waves thy Flag
Proudly o'er thy people, and in thy territory, too!
To the North—away! away!
DENMARK!
SWEDEN!
NORWAY!
ICELAND!
LAPLAND!
——Stay, illustrious Three!
Are ye chilled with your northern flight?
—O Queen, a moment pause in this thy marvellous pilgrimage!
Thou wilt not despise the doings of the poor Esquimaux, drearily shivering under Arctic ice:
Clad in the skins of creatures of the deep:
And in icy cavern, illumed by flickering Northern Lights, gorging on offal,
Or dreaming of the hunt of bear and wolf.—
O Queen, O Princes! illustrious of the Earth! behold in this sad soul,
One of the scattered family of Adam! Our brother! Your brother, great ones!
The brother of all Queens, Princes, Emperors, and Potentates.
The same blood, trickling through his chilly veins, through yours bounds blithely.——
And he hath heard the Sacred Volume read, and felt: and wept: and owned its hallowing influence![6]

PRUSSIA, proud, learned, thoughtful, martial!
—Ever like steel-clad, warrior

[1] See NOTE, No. IV.—'Scipio's Tears.'
[2] A.D. 1535—by Charles V.
[3] A.D. 1656.
[4] Constantinople is at this moment [1854 the centre of world-wide anxieties: the Muscovite's attempt to seize upon it having occasioned the European war, now commencing, in which England and France fight side by side to protect the injured, and repel the invader.
[5] Fohi, the supposed founder of the Chinese Empire, is considered, by some, to be NOAH.
[6] See NOTE, No. V.—'The Esquimaux' Question.'

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gleaming, armed cap-à-pie, ready for fight.[1]

Victoria greets The King!

Hail, sponsor of her son, our future King!

Thy face is anxious: and thy troubled eye scans fearfully thy realms,

Settling but now, from shock of revolution.

Near AUSTRIA!

On its confines, standing the grim Radetzky! On his lips are withering words.[2]

—But from his neck depends the Lamb,[3] gently:

All unconscious of its office.

From behind his Queen, modest in greatness,

Gazes upon the Austrian, WELLINGTON.

Behold the white-haired warrior-statesman, eagle-eyed,

Scanning the features of his aged brother[4] in arms!

He wears not the crimson vestments of war,

Nor the emblem of command;

Nor by his side,

Glitters the sword which freed the world,

Into its scabbard sternly thrust, at Waterloo.

What whispers the Queen to her Wellington? And he to his puissant Mistress?

—Of a vast Empire, thrilling still with mortal throes;

—Dismembered, but for mighty Muscovite,

Summoned to aid by an Imperial brother, in mortal thraldom.

Of strategy profound: encircling coils, tremendous, crushing revolt:[5]

Wasting anxieties, from mortal eye concealed, or sought to be:

All blessedly unknown to Her, now listening to her wise warrior-statesman's words.——

In vast mysterious RUSSIA, see Her now.

She leans upon the arm of friendly Czar.[6]

Madam, quoth he, I obey your gentle summons.

I send to your Palace a sample of my people's skill,—

A many-tongued race, a sixteenth of the family of Man,—and produce of my territories,

Stretching over a seventh of the terrestrial surface of the globe.

Northern Asia is mine:

Half Europe, and a great domain in Northern America.

There my possessions adjoin yours: as yours, those of the Republic which has sprung from you.

Then thought[7] the silent Queen,

Of all that owned her gently-potent sway, the wide world o'er.

Of her own dear sceptred Isle, ENGLAND!

A precious stone, set in the silver sea!

This land of such dear souls! this dear, dear land.[8]

Then, of her dominions in the North, the South, the East, the West.

Old World, and New—

Europe, Asia, Africa, America, Australasia—

[1] In setting out for the Prussian campaign, such was Napoleon's estimate of troops trained in the school of Frederick the Great, that he frequently said to his assembled officers at Mayence, 'We shall have earth to move in this war!'

[2] 'Soldaten! Der kampf wird kurz sein—Soldiers, the work will be short!' The words are engraved deeply on the base of the pedestal of the cast-iron statue.

[3] The Order of the Golden Fleece.

[4] Field-Marshal Radetzky is eighty-five years of age—having been born in the year 1766; the Duke of Wellington in 1760. The latter died on the 14th September 1852.

[5] The general plan of the vast military operations of Russia, in Hungary, in the spring of 1849, was—to form a complete circle of the whole territory: that circle rapidly to converge so as to compress the insurrection within a ring of armies. There was a perfect unity of purpose in the execution of this prodigious plan, which extinguished the insurrection; and then the Emperor's troops (150,000 in number) returned to Russia.—See *The Times* of the day.

[6] She is now [1854] at war with him.

[7] While the Emperor *tells* the Queen the extent of his dominions, she only meditates, silently, on her own, and on her mission.

[8] *Richard II.*, Act II. scene 1.

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Of Continents:
Of Islands, girdling the globe:
A sixth of Adam's family,[1] obedient to her rule—
Rule of a Christian Queen—
To civilise!
To free! protect!
To illume!
To Christianise![2]
Methought she whispered solemnly,
A mighty MISSION, Emperor, each!

Anon she points her son to INDIA, distant, dazzling, vast—
The coveted of conquering Potentates, in old and modern time;
But by Heaven assigned, to England—
Of victories, on victories:
Of valour and sagacity profound:
Of sullen Moloch: superstition: slaughter: and horrible idolatry:
And then she spoke of Canaan, and the Israelites,
And reverently echoed Holy Writ—
We have heard with our ears, O God, our fathers have told us, how thou hast driven out the heathen with thy hand, and planted them in: how thou hast destroyed the nations, and cast them out.
For they got not the land in possession through their own sword, neither was it their own arm that helped them;
But Thy right hand, and Thine arm, and the light of Thy countenance, because Thou hadst a favour unto them.[3]

Of AUSTRALASIA—
There, Islands huge, and a great Continent,——
There proudly flies Her flag,
In Eastern—and in Southern ocean
Glistening far, away!
—While saileth thitherward, from these loved shores,
Each barque so richly freighted with our loves,
Bearing fond but firmest hearts,
And leaving tender ones behind,
It may be never more to meet on earth——
O, God go with you, brethren, sisters dear!
Bearing the Holy Book! Our Laws, Religion, loyalty!
Your Queen, that lovely Majesty, is thinking of you all:
Dear to her gentle heart, her people far away—
No distance knows allegiance, loyalty, and Queenly love, and power.
— — —
O'er oceans sweeping breathlessly, a dizzy flight
Well-nigh the planet o'er!
Behold in CANADA, the Queen—its Queen!
Calmly she views her vast domain,
A ninth part of earth's surface![4]
Grand, beautiful, and boundless in resource!
Loyal and true her sons!
Reserved for signal destiny!
Ten thousand miles of ocean cannot melt
The links of love,
That bind their brave hearts to their Queen!
All hail, ye hardy sons of enterprise, and brethren dear!
She gazes proudly, thoughtfully!
— — —
Down, down the wondrous Nave!
Through the old kingdoms of the Earth,
Swelling yet with revolution's surge—lo! The New World!
How now! Where is She now?
Methought her course was Westerly![5]
The West hath settled in the East!
How passing strange!
Confusion all!—North, South, East, West,
New, Old, Past, Present,
Huddled all together!

[1] According to the latest and best authorities, the population of the world is about a thousand and seventy-five millions; and the British dominions now embrace, since the recent acquisitions in India, ONE HUNDRED AND SEVENTY MILLION OF SOULS!
[2] See NOTE, No. VI.—'Prince Albert on the Mission and Destiny of England.'
[3] Psalm xliv. 1-4.
[4] See NOTE, No. VII.—'The New Mediterranean.'
[5] In the Crystal Palace, the *Eastern* extremity of the Nave is appropriated to the United States of America.

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Here, in the East, She stands: yet in AMERICA!—
Hail, England's lusty offspring!
All hail! Ye stalworth sons and daughters fair,
Of Anglo-Saxon ancestry!
In your new home magnificent,
Even yet scarce settled!
The Queen of England greets you well!
And such Her thoughts the while,
As but an English Queen can know!
She stands in contemplation grave.
Skilled though She be, in Queenly lore,
She cannot read your destiny.
Sees she a cloud, the South o'ershadowing?
—Brethren, ye bring a form of Beauty, and IN CHAINS!
Look ye yourselves, upon her loveliness!
Ponder her thrilling tale of grief!—
She is not mute, O, marble eloquent!
She pleads! She pleads!
Gazing on Stars and Stripes,
To your own selves she turns,[1]
And pleads, in manacles!
Though listens England's Queen, she listens all in vain!
Sweet slave!
Turn from our Queen beloved, that agonising look!
No chains, no bonds, Her myriad subjects bear,
They melt, in contact with the British air:
Her sceptre waves, and fetters disappear!
Turn, turn, then, beauteous slave!
O, make thy mournful suit,
To these deep meaning ones, who sent thee hither!
Their Saxon brethren here, can only sigh!
—Who stand behind thee, beautiful one?
Daughter and son of Shem! how came ye hither?
Wild brother of the woods!
Clad in the spoils of eagle, buffalo, and bear!
Strange son of Adam!
Sharer of his chartered rights!
But why that hideous scalp,
From thy slain brother torn?
Kinsman of Cain!
And thou! Physician![2]
Thou stand'st before a Christian Queen!
Why wear that emblem of a savage hate!

— — —

—Did ever Queen within such Palace stand?
Were ever Queen and Prince so matched before?
A Prince philosopher, and philosophic Prince?
Majesty! Philosophy!
In shining union seen!
Exalted Pair!
A banquet here is spread, right royally,
For all mankind—
State laid aside, and Majesty, and Royalty, and Lowliness, partakers all,
All, all alike, nor frowns, nor fears,
Queen, Prince, and People—
——A Queen and Prince are gone!

A unit unperceived,
I sink into the living stream again!—
Nave, transept, aisles and galleries,
Pacing untired: insatiate!
—Amazing spectacle!
Touchstone of character! capacity! and knowledge!
Spectacle, now lost in the Spectators: then spectators, in the spectacle!
Rich: poor: gentle: simple: wise: foolish: young: old: learned: ignorant: thoughtful: thoughtless: haughty: humble: frivolous: profound:
Every grade of intellect: every shade of character!

[1] The beautiful statue of the Greek Slave (by Hiram Power, an American sculptor), placed in the nave, in front of the United States department, stood on a revolving pedestal.

[2] These two interesting figures, modelled from the life—the man a physician among the American Ioway Indians, and having his leggings 'fringed *with scalp-locks taken from his enemies' heads*;' and the woman, a Mandan Indian, one of the native tribes west of the Rocky Mountains—were sent to the Crystal Palace by Mr Catlin. Neither of the originals, who were lately in England, happened to be a subject of Her Majesty; but she has many such.

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Here, is a voluble smatterer: suddenly discomfited by the chance question of a curious child: and rather than own ignorance, will tell him falsely!

There, a bustling piece of earth: one of the earth, earthy: testing everything by money value!

Here is a stale bundle of prejudices, hard bound together: to whom everything here is topsy-turvy, and discoloured, seen through jaundiced eyes!

Here comes one, serenely unconscious that he is a fool!

There is one suddenly startled by a suspicion that he knows scarcely anything!

Here is one listening, with seeming lively interest, and assenting gestures, to a scientific explanation, of which he comprehends nothing; but appearances must be kept up!

There is one falsely thinking himself the observed of observers; trying to look unconscious, and distinguished!

Here is one that will not see a timid poor relation, or an humble friend; as fashionable folk are near!

Yonder is a Statesman: gliding about alone: watchful: thoughtful: cautious: pondering national characters: habits: capabilities: localities: wants: superfluities: rival systems of policy, their fruits and workings: imagining new combinations: speculating on remote consequences.

Yonder walks one who has committed, or is meditating, great crime; and hoping that his heavy eye may here be attracted, and his mind dazzled into a moment's forgetfulness; but it is in vain.

There is a Philosopher, to whose attuned ear the Spectacle speaks myriad-tongued: telling of patient sagacity: long foiled, at length—or suddenly—triumphant: of centuries of mis-directed, abortive toil:[1] of pain, suffering, privation: of one sowing, what another shall reap!

Here is a philanthropist—thinking of blood-stained Slavery:

[1] The Quadrature of the Circle, Perpetual Motion, the Inextinguishable Lamp, and the Philosopher's Stone, have racked the brains of philosophers and mathematicians for ages, in vain, except in respect of discoveries made incidentally.

Of millions, dealt with as though they were the very beasts that perish: bought: sold: scourged: slain: as if their Maker had not seen them, nor heard their groans, nor treasured their tears:[2] nor set them down against the appointed Reckoning!

Here is one, little thinking that he will suddenly fall dead to-morrow: having much on hand, both of business and pleasure!

There is one tottering under the weight of ninety years: to whom the grasshopper is a burden:[3] leaning on the arms of dutiful and lusty youth: gazing with glazed eye: silent with wise wonder!

Here sits a laughing child, upon a gleaming cannon!

Yonder is a blind man, sightless amidst surrounding splendours: but there is one telling him tenderly that he stands beside the statue of Milton!

There, in the glistening centre of the Transept, stands an aged exile:[4] venerable: widowed: once a Queen: looking at the tranquil image of Queen Victoria: meditating, with a sigh, on the happy security of her throne!

Yonder is a musing poet: gazing silently Eastward—Westward—Northward—Southward: above—below:

Everywhere pouring a living tide of wonder——nor silent——nor noisy ——a strange hum[5]—

A radiant flood of light——many-hued objects, now glittering brightly ——then glistening—— fainter and fainter, till lost in distance,

Whence come faintly the strains of rich music——intermingling mysteriously with the gentle hum around him—

[2] Surely Thou hast seen it; for Thou beholdest ungodliness and wrong, that Thou mayest take the matter into Thine hand.—Psalm x. 15, 16.

[3] And the grasshopper shall be a burden.—Eccles. xii. 5.

[4] The widow of the ex-King of the French, Louis Philippe.

[5] 'It is a crowd of men,' says an old author quoted in one of the London journals of the 9th August 1851, 'with vast confusion of tongues—like Babel. The noise in it is like that of bees: a strange humming, or buzz, mixed of walking and talking — tongues and feet: it is a kind of still roar, or loud whisper.'

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Gliding about, forms of exquisite beauty, most delicate loveliness!—

Living, eclipsing the sculptured, Beauty, at which it is looking, with blushing consciousness!——

Yonder, a fair daughter of Eve, before the Mother of all living: her shuddering eye glancing at the serpent, her ear catching the deadly whisper!

Far away, in shape and gesture proudly eminent,[1] Satan——as it were, showing all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them, in a moment of time.

There they are! Great Nations, new and old, with their bright banners streaming: helm: lance: sabre—scimitar——See there, solemnly silent all, Crusaders!——

The soundless crashing of a mailed throng—banners! the Crescent! Cross! fierce-gleaming Saracen! Saladin! Cœur-de-Lion! glorious De Bouillon!

A dim religious light——Dante! Tasso! Milton! SHAKESPEARE!——there They are!

Could they see but this——or he, with eyes like theirs!

Be stirred with glorious thoughts like theirs!

Ah, sinking deeper still in reverie—dreamy—delicious!

—Still the hum—the dazzle——

Gifted one! Up, Laureate! Wake! Ay, it is no dream, but radiant reality!—

Up, Laureate, with thy lyre,
And rapturously sweep its thrilling strings!

Give forth grand strains, echoing through all time to come,

Surpassing Pindar's, as thine his Theme transcendeth far——

* * *

Here are the Philosophers: among them HERSCHEL, the successor of Newton: standing before the huge telescope, thinking of one greater still, constructed by the philosophic Peer[2] beside him:

And they are speaking of Nebulæ resolved, resolvable: stars made faintly visible, so distant, that the mere attempt to conceive their remoteness, prostrates mortal imagination, awfully lessening of limited faculties:—faint—just visible—now hid—little specks: others even to these vast powers, utterly and for ever invisible——some, whose light, though travelling in a minute twelve millions of miles, requires fourteen thousand years[3] to reach this planet——

Each star, again, itself probably a System, on the outermost verge of another, possibly containing inhabitants gifted with powers greater than man can conceive of, and who are, at this moment, with unassisted sense, viewing systems ten thousand, thousand, thousand times still further off from them, than they from us.

* * *

—Glorious Suns, round Suns, each with its train of Planets and Satellites, for ever shrouded in the splendour of their respective suns, from the little eye of man!——

Double stars——of orange, blue, green, crimson, ruddy purple![4]

—Think, quoth he, of twin suns, red, and green—or yellow, and blue: what resplendent variety of illumination they may afford to a planet circling about either! charming contrasts and grateful vicissitudes—a red and green day, alternating with a white one, and with darkness![5]

[1] *Paradise Lost*, Book I.

[2] The Earl of Rosse, President of the Royal Society.

[3] Sir John Herschel says, of a star whose light takes a thousand years to reach the small planet which we inhabit, that in observing its place, and noticing its changes, we are, in fact, reading only their history, of a thousand years' date, thus wonderfully recorded.—The assertion in the text refers to the stars most recently rendered visible by the stupendous instrument of Lord Rosse.

[4] The star η, Cassiopeiæ exhibits, says Sir John Herschel, the beautiful combination of a large white star, and a small one of rich ruddy purple.—Milton, in his Eighth Book of *Paradise Lost*, has a remarkable passage, noticed by Herschel. The angel Raphael is saying to Adam—

> ——'Other suns, perhaps,
> With their attendant moons, thou wilt descry:
> Communicating male and female light,
> (Which two great sexes animate the world)
> Stored in each orb, perhaps, with some that live.'

Note.—Milton died about twelve years before Sir Isaac Newton's discovery of the law of gravitation.

[5] HERSCHEL'S *Astronomy*, pp. 394-5.

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——And these countless and infinitely distant systems all subject to the law of gravitation, discovered by a brief denizen of this tiny planet!

——This Sun of ours, with all his attendants, moving bodily towards a mystic point in the Heavens![1]

Stars — blazing brightly in past ages, but which have since mysteriously disappeared!—

* * *

Yonder, are the twin sons of Science, Le Verrier and Adams — a noble Pair, in noble rivalry: England and France!

Speaking modestly of their sublime discovery, though one which would have gladdened the heart of Newton!

——Uranus, saith one,—discovered by the father of our living Herschel, at once doubled the boundaries of the solar system; and, at a distance of eighteen hundred and twenty-two millions of miles, is observed somewhat disturbed in performing its journey:

The two astronomers, separately bent on discovering the cause, by a rare application of transcendent science, succeed at length in detecting the attractive influence of a remote unseen orb—a new planet: Neptune—

As far beyond Uranus, as he beyond Saturn! at thirty times our own distance from the sun:

Two thousand eight hundred and fifty millions of miles off: moreover, not only pointing out where a Planet would ere long be found,

But weighing the mass of the predicted mysterious Visitor—

Numbering the years of his revolution,

[1] 'I believe,' said the Astronomer-Royal, Mr Airy, on a recent occasion, 'that every astronomer who has examined this matter carefully, has come to a conclusion very nearly the same as that of Sir William Herschel, that the whole solar system is moving bodily towards a star [λ] in the constellation Hercules.'—The motion of the entire solar system proceeds at the prodigious rate of one hundred and fifty millions of miles a-year! that vast distance being only an infinitesimal arc of the immeasurable circle in which the system is destined to revolve. — Airy's *Lectures on Astronomy*, ed. 1849.

And telling the dimensions of his stupendous orbit![2]

Behold, at length The Intruder! attended, now, by Satellite,

Gleaming in cold, shadowy, remote splendour, and graciously visible, first, to the eyes of the patient twins of astronomic science who had heralded his grand approach—Neptune, now just five years old!——

Yonder is Bessel, the Prussian Astronomer, discoverer, at length, of the distance of a Fixed Star![3]—sixty-three billions of miles off![4]——nearly seven hundred thousand times our own distance from the sun—which is ninety-five millions three hundred thousand miles away! And this utterly inconceivable distance exactly measured, by means of a common yard-measure! And there is another tell ing an incredulous wonderer that we have weighed the Sun! and his planets——even Neptune!—ay, down to the pound-weight avoirdupois[4]—and even,—for the fastidiously exact,—down to Grains:——and they are

[2] *Given*, says a Scotch astronomer, Mr C. Maclaren, in a paper describing this glorious triumph of science, — the position, mass, and periodic times of two planets; the astronomer is able, though it is no easy task, to calculate the perturbation which either will produce on the other. But the problem which is the counterpart of this —viz. *given the perturbations*—to find the position, mass, and periodic time of an unknown disturbing body—is one of such infinite difficulty, that certainly few astronomers believed it to admit of a satisfactory solution.—See Professor Pillans' *Elements of Physical and Classical Geography*.—Introd. xxxix.

[3] Enormous as is the distance of this star — No 61, *Cygni*, (63,000,000,000,000 miles,) says our Astronomer-Royal (Biddell Airy) I state it as my deliberate opinion, founded upon a careful examination of the whole of the process of observation and calculation, that it is ascertained with what may be called, in such a problem, considerable accuracy. A few years previously to this great discovery Sir John Herschel had stated, (*Astronomy*, p. 378), that 'the distance of a fixed star could not be so small as *nineteen* billions of miles: but how much greater it might be, we know not.' Now, however, we do: viz. *forty-four* billions of miles greater!

[4] The number of cubic miles in the earth, is 250,800,000,000; each of these miles contains 147,200,000,000 cubic feet; and each of these cubic feet weighs 354 lb. 6 oz. avoirdupois.—Astronomer-Royal.

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standing before an instrument [1] which can weigh to the ten-thousandth part of that grain! [2]

There is the French FOUCAULT: who has shown to our very eyes, and since this marvellous Palace was opened, the Earth moving on its axis! Creating a new motion in the pendulum, independent of that actual one given to it by the earth, at the point of suspension. [3]

And there is an English astronomer explaining to a gifted fair one how, just fifty years ago, the interval between the orbits of Mars and Jupiter, —three hundred and fifty millions of miles, — appeared vacant; within which, nevertheless, it was said, a hundred years ago, that there might have been once a Planet rolling, till shattered by some fearful internal convulsion, or collision with some heavenly body: and that, if such had been the case, its fragments might hereafter be found circling within that space: and now—amazing reality!—there are Fourteen [4] of those fragments, ten of them found within the last five years—the last since this Palace was opened, and fitly called IRENE — and its discoverer is here, saying that he is constantly watching for other and smaller fragments, believing he has already seen, and lost them again:

[1] Fox's magnetised weighing-balance. There is also a barometer, showing the thousandth part of an inch in the rise and fall of the mercury!

[2] The *weight* of a body is proportional to the *attraction* which it exerts. The weights of all the bodies of the solar system, are necessarily referred to the weight of the earth, as a standard: and the weight of the sun, as compared with that of the earth, is ascertained by comparing the attractive power of each, at the same distance. And so of the planets — those, at least, with satellites.

[3] The author has personally ascertained from several of our most eminent astronomers—one of them, Sir John Herschel, another Captain Smyth—that M. Foucault's experiment is a real and successful one, though extremely delicate and difficult to perform so as to obtain correct results. Such also is the opinion of the Astronomer-Royal.

[4] Since *The Lily and the Bee* appeared [1851], the number of these mysterious tenants of the sky has [1854] increased to TWENTY-NINE! In the year 1852 alone, nine of them were discovered! Our countryman, Mr Hind, has discovered that number.

that they come so close towards each other, that there is danger of collision! especially if their orbits should be altered by the perturbation of mighty Jupiter! [5]

Behold the astronomers curiously scanning sextants, quadrants, circles, and transit instruments—and the huge telescope pointed inquisitively towards the Heavens: each thinking of his midnight vigils, sitting with eye fixed on the rolling orbs of Heaven: vast worlds in rapid harmonious motion: and the philosophers are musing on the powers of telescopic vision, being hereafter augmented, so as to detect the existence of stars so far off that their light may not reach us for ten thousand years to come, though travelling two hundred thousand miles a second — and ten thousand times swifter than the earth [6] in its orbit, ever since the hour when the Almighty placed Adam in Paradise [7]——

Millions, beyond millions, upon millions, of stars, suns, systems, peopling infinitude!

— Here is one inspecting Microscopes: and telling of *their* transcendent powers, and awe-inspiring revelations — converting the smallest visible grain of sand into a vast fragment of rock, a thousand million times more bulky: [8] showing a drop of water instinct with visible life, myriad-formed, every atom consummately organised! [9]

Within the space of a grain of mustard seed, eight millions of living active creatures, all richly endowed

[5] See Note, No. VIII. — 'The Shattered Planet.'

[6] It may possibly surprise one not accustomed to attend to such matters, that the earth which he inhabits is whirled through space, in its journey round the sun, at the rate of one million six hundred and thirty nine thousand three hundred and thirty-two miles a-day—*i. e.* eleven hundred and thirty-eight miles a minute, and nineteen miles in a second.

[7] See *ante*, p. 14, note 8.

[8] HERSCHEL'S *Discourse on Natural Philosophy*, 191.

[9] Distributed everywhere, throughout the world,—in every element,—in the internal moisture of living plants, and animal bodies, —carried about in the vapour and dust of the whole atmosphere of the earth, exists a mysterious and infinite kingdom of living crea-

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with the organs and faculties of animal life by Him who so fearfully and wonderfully made these bodies of ours,[1] revealing an unfathomableness of organic creation in the smallest space, as of stars in the vast immense——O, overwhelming realities and mysteries!

A world in every atom—a system in every star![2]——

There is OWEN, profoundly pondering a shapeless slab of stone, neglected, and perhaps unseen, by millions: yet may he read in it an immense significance![3]

Here is STEPHENSON, contemplating the model of the Britannia Bridge—and telling of his toils and anxieties, in spanning the Straits with iron tubes, through which now shoots the hissing thundering Train,

Dizzily high o'er the stream,

Which the Roman invader of Anglesey passed, nearly eighteen hundred years ago,[4] with his legions, on flat-bottomed boats, and with swimming cavalry, to encounter the Druids in their last retreat:

Beholding women with waving torches, — running, with dishevelled locks, to and fro, and in wild shrieks echoing the imprecations of their priests, all soon silenced, and their utterers slaughtered, and flung into fires prepared for the invaders.

Now he is speaking with brother engineers—English, French, German, Russian — showing the Hydraulic Press, which raised to the height of a hundred feet huge tubes of iron two thousand tons in weight:—now the French turbine: the centrifugal pump: the steam-hammer—oh, mighty STEAM!

— Here behold POWER!—

Exact: docile: delicate: tremendous in operation: dealing, easily, alike with filmy gossamer lace, silk, flax, hemp, cotton, granite, iron!

Power, all bright and gleaming, as though conscious, and endued with volition:

Exhibiting bewildering complexities of movement, and working vast results:

Movements which yet a child's finger may stop suddenly! as though he had unwittingly caused Mechanical death.

Here is FARADAY, speaking of magnetism, electricity, galvanism, electro-galvanism, electro-magnetism, and chemical decomposition: — while others beside him are conjecturing whether light, heat, electricity, magnetism, and other forms of FORCE, may not ere long be brought into distinct relation to each other: obeying ONE GREAT LAW, having the same relation to atoms in proximate contact, as gravitation to those at a measurable and appreciable distance: one subtle, mysterious, all-pervading Force, of nature, it may be, for ever undiscoverable, and potency infinite[5]—reverently be it spoken, the second Right hand of the Creator,[6] Chemical power, the great controlling and conservative agency, — as Mechanical power, the First——

And has the modest philosopher a flickering consciousness, a faint oft-vanishing suspicion, that he is about to behold Nature's secret recesses and laboratories, closed since the Creation, suddenly thrown open?——

tures, of whose existence man had never dreamed till his senses were so prodigiously aided by the microscope.—See PRICHARD *On Infusoria*, pp. 1, 2.

[1] Plato has said, in a magnificent spirit, that probably it were no difficult thing to demonstrate that the gods are as mindful of the minute as of the vast.

[2] Chaque monde peut-être n'est qu'un atome, et chaque atome est un monde.—MADAME DE STAEL.

[3] *Post.*, p. 21.

[4] *Circiter* A. D. 59. Anglesey was the seat of the Druids, and subdued by the Romans, A. D. 78. The passage in the text relates to the slaughter of the Druids and the people in the former year, by Suetonius Paulinus. The spot where it is said to have occurred is still shown at a ferry on the Straits.

[5] Faraday's discovery, that those substances which the magnet cannot attract, *it repels*, — and that, whilst those which it attracts, arrange themselves parallel to the magnetic axis, those which it repels arrange themselves *exactly across it* — that is, at right angles, in an equatorial direction, —has been justly pronounced to be the most important contribution to physical science, since the discovery of Newton concerning the law of force in gravitation, and the universal action of that force. — See ANSTED'S *Geology*, p. 18.

[6] Dr MACCULLOCH.

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That he stands on the threshold of some immense discovery, pregnant with revolution in human knowledge?

—See, all around, the shining traces of MAN'S Presence and Powers, in this his allotted scene of action:

Powers daily developing, till the strongest Intellect bends under the pressure of accumulated discovery!

Lord of the Creation, all animals are his—the fowls of the air: the fishes of the sea: cattle: and every creeping thing:

He captures them: compels them to do his bidding:

Changes their nature: turns their weapons upon themselves: slays them:

Nay, he TORTURES! in the plenitude of his power, in the wantonness of his will:

Minute or stupendous: hideous or beautiful: gentle or fierce, all own his sway, and fall his prey, alike for his necessity, or his sport;

He feasts on their flesh: with it, daintily pampers his luxurious palate: he gaily decks himself in their spoils: he imprisons them,—captive witnesses of his Lordship:[1]

Smiling tranquilly, he contemplates howling, roaring, hissing, yawning monsters, whose very blighting breath he feels:

Tenants of every element: scorpion: serpent: eagle: lion: dragon: behemoth!

He hollows mountains: he levels hills: he raises valleys: he splits open rocks: he spans vast streams: he beats back the roaring ocean.

He mounts into the air, and is dizzily hid in the clouds:

He descends into the earth, and extorts its precious treasures:

He sails round the globe, defiant of storm,

Commanding the wind and the tide:

He dives to the bottom of the ocean,

Mindless of monsters amazed,
Rifling its coral and pearl,
And recovering its long-hidden spoils.

He turns water into air, and air into water:

The solid substance into fleeting vapour, and vapour again into substance.

Light and the lightning he hath made his dazzling ministers and messengers:

They do his imperious bidding:

They array his handiwork, in the twinkling of an eye, in splendour, golden and silver:

They image his lordly features:

Arrest the fleeting shadow:

Do the dread behests of justice, flying fast as his thought:

Speak his instant pleasure beneath the ocean: from distant shore, to shore:

Traversing continents: joining East, West, North, South,

And boldly threatening Time and Space!

His venturous eye has pierced the awful Heaven:

He scans illimitable space:

He weighs the shining orbs:

He tells their laws, distances, motions, and relations:

The misty WAY he turns into myriad blazing suns:

He tracks the mysterious travellers of remotest space, foretelling their COMINGS and their GOINGS.

He dares even to speculate upon the Unseen!

THE INFINITE!

Omniscience——

Omnipresence——

Omnipotence——

And reverently contemplates Him Whose darkened Image he bears, oft forgetfully: HIS MAKER: Him, who erst asked awfully, *Adam, Where art thou?*

The High and Lofty One, that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is HOLY: Who saith, I dwell in the high and holy place: with him also that is of a contrite and humble

[1] This is in allusion to the zoological exhibitions in modern times, so profoundly interesting and suggestive to a devout and philosophic mind.

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spirit: to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite.[1]

He hath showed thee, O Man, what is good: and what doth He require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?[2]

This, from the highest Heavens—the Holy of Holies!

From GOD, to Man!

—O come, let us worship and fall down, and kneel before the Lord our Maker.

For He is the Lord our God, and we are the people of His pasture, and the sheep of His hand![3]

—O, what a piece of work is a Man!

How noble in reason!

How infinite in faculty!

In form and moving, how express and admirable!

In action, how like an angel!

In apprehension, how like a God!

The beauty of the world!

—But, methinks, great Bard, I hear a grander voice than thine, while my abasèd[4] head touches my kindred dust, in trembling humbled awe—

When I consider THY heavens, the work of THY fingers:

The Moon, and the Stars, which THOU hast ordained:

What is man, that THOU art mindful of him,

And the son of man, that THOU visitest him:[5]

Man, like a thing of naught, his time passing away like a shadow![6]

* * *

[1] Isaiah, lvii. 15. [2] Micah, vi. 18.

[3] Psalm xcv. 6, 7.

[4] There is an abasement because of glory: and there is that lifteth up his head from a low estate.—Eccles. xx. 11.

[5] SHAKESPEARE, *Hamlet*, Act II. scene 2. Psalm viii. 3-4. *Note.*—Our illustrious philosopher Boyle, never heard the name of the Deity mentioned, nor uttered it himself, without reverently removing his hat from his head.

[6] For we are but as yesterday, and know nothing, because our days upon earth are a shadow!—Job, viii. 9.

KOH-I-NOOR![7] All hail!

Monarch of Gems—so say some of thy courtly flatterers.

For such thou, royal one, like other royal ones, most surely hast! Art thou a Queen, yet not The Queen, of gems? They whisper of an Imperial gem—and another of priceless value; as yet uncut—as though Royalty mistrusted lapidary—or its Gem!

And thou art but half-cut,[8] oh Koh-i-Noor! Shorn of half thy beams!

Did barbarian ignorance arrest and palsy the tremulous hand patiently developing thy prismatic splendour?[9]

And art thou doomed ever to wear this disfigured and half-darkened form?

What art thou, Koh-i-Noor? Hearest thou the name given thee, obsequiously?—

MOUNTAIN OF LIGHT!

Glittering atom! Morsel of earth! Condensed vapour! Charcoal!

Dare I whisper these things in royal ear?

Thou, a Mountain?

Perchance thou knowest what man, to know, would give unnumbered millions—

One a thousand times as great, as bright, as beautiful, as thou; but hid for ever from the eye of man:

True mountain crystalline!——and scarce missed,—yet exactly missed,

By the sharp pickaxe of the wearied slave!

Such little, little[10] gems as thou, alone, Koh-i-Noor, to man vouchsafed,

Lying in dirt! Deep, hid in dirt—in Golconda's mine.

Thou hast a mystery about thee, Koh-i-Noor.

[7] This famous diamond was found in the mines of Golconda, in the year 1550; and in precisely three centuries afterwards, viz. in the year 1850, was brought to England, as the forfeit of oriental faithlessness. It had belonged to the King of Cabul.

[8] Koh-i-Noor has been since cut, with great skill and success. It is now one of the Crown jewels.

[9] This alludes to an incident in the history of the gem: and the same remark applies to several passages following.

[10] The largest known diamond weighed, *it is said*, before cutting, nearly six ounces Troy.

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Art thou a thing, but as of yesterday? Or million, million ages old?

Dost thou, a radiant messenger, tell us of central fire, whose fearful office has been foretold to man?[1]

Proud Gem, loving the summit of the diadem, and potent sceptre, emblems of power supreme!

Sitting before us, throned in state, and with thy two supporters,[2] here hast thou received homage of millions!

Two of thy royal race, as thou mayst know, are glistering eyes of hideous Juggernaut!——

And thou, fair Koh-i-Noor! wast doomed to bear them dismal company,

And flame upon the brow of Moloch, horrid king![3]

Besmeared with blood of human sacrifice.

Grim idol! Towering o'er slaughtered millions—

Ay, Koh-i-Noor, destined to this office, and by a Dying tyrant—

Another happier fate was thine!

Here art thou, sent hither by thy royal Mistress,

Brought to her by her brave sons from the distant East.

And she hath sent thee hither, Koh-i-Noor! Silently to teach, and to delight the eyes of those she loves!

A store of gems she hath, of thy bright sisterhood; but, hear it! beaming bit of earth!

She hath a jewel far outblazing thee! Guarded more jealously,

Not by brazen bars,

But, shrined within her Royal heart of hearts,

There lies, a people's Love!

Koh-i-Noor—having done thee suit and service due, with my myriad fellows,

Lo! I would speak with thee!

What thoughts are passing through thy translucent bosom,

Purest ray Serene?

Thou hast beauteous kinsfolk:

Lovely sisters: arrayed in sapphire, ruby, emerald hue:

But also,

A black[4] sister, Koh-i-Noor!

Standing modestly, far away from thee: within this Palace, but not in thine.

What! art thou ashamed of her?

Wouldst thou disclaim relationship?

Not so, sweet gem! And now I do bethink me, I, too, my black brother have!

And I disclaim him not!

Behold him by my side!

Hail! my black brother!

Son of Adam, once fetter-laden—not by us, but fetter-freed!

Come, pass me by, and take thy stand, erect and free,

Fearless midst England's great, and beautiful, and brave!

And thus thinketh THE QUEEN, of the two Diamonds!

—Koh-i-Noor! All is not flattery, that hath been whispered by the millions who have gazed at thee.

I wonder hast thou heard, whispering disparagement, Expectation disappointed——

Depreciation! Sneers!

Yet art thou all thou dost profess to be,

Come from a Queen:

Destined with English Queens and Kings, to be all time hereafter!

O gem! Couldst thou but know what thoughts and feelings, strange and various, oft scarcely owned, thou hast excited here!

Couldst thou read the hearts of those clustering, bee-like, ceaselessly around thy throne, thy footstool!

Here a Philosopher: coldly deeming thee a shining exponent of false value.

There a Chemist: smiling at thy fancied adamantineness: knowing that he can resolve thee into primitive

[1] Thirty-five miles below the surface of the earth, says Humboldt, (*Cosmos*, vol. i. p. 278), the central heat is everywhere so great that granite itself is held in fusion.—*The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the Heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat: the earth, also, and the works that are therein, shall be burnt up.*—2 Peter, iii. 10.

[2] There was a costly but inferior diamond on each side of Koh-i-Noor.

[3] MILTON.

[4] There was a black diamond exhibited in the Crystal Palace, in one of the galleries; Koh-i-Noor being enthroned in a curiously-contrived brazen structure, nearly in the centre of the transept.

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vapour:[1] dreaming, even, that he can reproduce thee in thy crystalline form!

Yonder is one looking at thee with fell eye: knowing that he could do murder, to get thee, or thy worth.

There here have gazed on thee, owners of GEMS more precious, incomparably far, than thou!

One, of melting charity, a good Samaritan: musing that, had he thy fancied equivalent of gold and silver, he would secretly scatter thy radiant representatives over the dark realms of misery and want,

Where hopeless Anguish pours her moan,
And lonely Want retires to die![2]

—Seest thou a feeble form, attenuate,
The death-flower blooming on his wasted cheek?

He dare not mingle with the eager throng ceaselessly surrounding thee.

His brilliant eye hath caught but distant glimpse of thee.

On his eyelids is the shadow of death.[3] He, too, bears a gem within: GENIUS: its splendour consuming the frail casket.

By its inner light he views this scene, his soul a star, dwelling apart,[4] in starry solitude, as not a soul of all within these glassy walls can view it: No, none, save gifted he:

Motes in sunbeams, merely, they, with him compared.

Gifted one! Dear soul: Poor soul! an humble eye is on thee,

All unknown to thee: unseen by man, a pitying tear hath fallen.

I can no more!

No mortal man can stay thy flight, from earth to native skies.

Not many suns shall set, well knoweth he, alas!

Who now, with trembling hand,
Wipeth the death dew from his exhausted brow,

Ere he close hid in dust shall lie,
Yet seen by one Omniscient eye,
Hidden the casket, only: the jewel far away, high in the skies,
And rapturously viewing brighter scenes than these!

And yonder one, of mien so meek and modest!

Schooled in affliction's sharpest school—a SUFFERER—schooled! sublimed!

Nor grief, nor want, nor pain,
Neglect, nor scorn of proud Mankind,
Can shake his constant soul,
Nor dim the Gem he bears,
A FAITH, divine.

Oh what a blessed eye is his, looking serene on thee!

Mountain of Light! Pale now thy ineffectual fire,

Poor gem, eclipsèd utterly!

A dull, faint spark before the lustrous gem He wears!

Its sweet light shall shine more sweetly still,

In the Dark Valley which we all must tread,

Turning the shadow of death into the morning![5]

Taken the last dark step,—at length got Home,

Then that gem blazes suddenly!
As in a kindred element,
Illuming immortality.

* * *

—Aloof he stood from courtly crowd
Around the throne of Koh-i-Noor.

Of the crowd, and not the gem, thought he:

With folded arms, standing, while a faint smile flickered o'er his thought-worn face.

This was a deep Philosopher.

—I know a STONE, quoth he, not far away,
Which I prefer to Koh-i-Noor.
But nobody sees, and nobody cares
For that same stone.
It glittereth not like Koh-i-Noor,
Yet tells a tale that's music in my ear,
And would be so to millions more,

[1] Sir Isaac Newton, in speculating on the connection between the chemical composition of bodies and their refractive powers, came to the conclusion that diamond was 'an unctuous substance coagulated:' a sagacious prediction, says Sir David Brewster, verified in the discoveries of modern chemistry.

[2] DR JOHNSON. [3] Job, xvi. 16.

[4] WORDSWORTH. [5] Amos, v. 8.

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Wonderful to the world, if but the world would hear!
O mild Philosopher, quoth I,
What you have murmured, I have heard:
I'll see your stone;
And what it then shall speak,
Interpret to an ignorant ear!

——Away! away! o'er ocean swiftly sweeping,
And in cold Canada!
Yes, there, saith he, It lies!
A slab of plain grey stone,
Under deep strata for ages hid;
Inscribed by Nature's mystical finger,
With faintest character,
For reading of instructed eye.
But, ho! the time!—the time! when this was writ!
Millions of ages since have passed!
No stone, was then this stone,
But sand of a sea,
Washed by primeval ocean of this Planet!
So long ago—
O, so long ago, I fear to say, and be believed!
When flourished the Forests turned to coal,
Is but as Yesterday,
In comparison,
Of that far distant day,
When that Sea
Or gently kissed, or boisterously beat,
Upon that ancient shore.
Then all along that shore, those sands,
Now, This Stone,
Crawled a mailed reptile,[1] slowly, painfully:
Now moving on: then resting for a while,
Tired, or, perchance, looking for food:
But wotting little he, the while,
That reptile old and strange!
That his footsteps would be tracked,
And his uncouth figure pictured thence,
By a keen and learned eye,
In this Our Day,
Millions of ages after!

[1] *Crustacean*, of modern naturalists.

That sand then,
Stone now, here,
Within our Palace!
—A mail-clad creature, he, these prints that made.
And, still more than this,
Behold the trace of the passing Shower!
That may have beat upon his mailed back,
As he crawled along that ancient shore,
When low lay the tide.
And even this, beyond—
The direction of the wind I tell,
While fell that shower!
——Sir, it is well, saith he, to scan
What's writ on this neglected Stone.
Though faint its character, its import is sublime.[2]
Telling of Life, and Air sustaining it:
Of genial Showers, moistening the ground:
Flux and reflux of tidal wave:
Attractive force of the revolving orbs of Light,
Greater and lesser,
Night and day then governing:[3]
All, all revealed to him, who, coming countless ages after,
Scanneth this Stone, with an instructed eye.
Therefore, wonderful is this Stone,
Thus mystically writ upon. And
It is the True Philosopher's Stone!
I listened thoughtfully, and again he spoke,
For we were all alone: others
Attending the levee of Koh-i-Noor,
And her Royal sisters.
While crawled that reptile on this Shore,
And zephyrs swept his mailed back,
The sun upon the sea,
At morning, noon, and even shone;
By night, the silver moon,
While glittered the tremulous stars:
But from the surface of that ancient sea,
Looked None up,
Rejoicing in the lovely light;
No ship, no sail, nor boat, nor barque,

[2] That import may be gathered from Note No. IX.—'The Philosopher's Stone.'
[3] See Note, No. IX.

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Not all the world of undulating waters o'er:
But far beneath,
In dim abyss,
Glared hideous upturned eyes[1] of CHEPHALASP,
Waiting his gorged prey of Shark,
Itself devouring other!

Age after age rolled on!
Sparkling still the stars:
Still shone the rising and the setting Sun,
In silent splendour,
And shed the moon her mellow light:
But now upon the monster PLESIOSAUR,
Slimy and black,
Uprising from its muddy bed, and
Crawling fearful to that sea,
With neck outstretched, and flaming eye!

Still waxed and waned the gentle Moon,
Upon the earth, all verdant now!
Which trod the IGUANODON,
And MEGALOSAUR,
And next trembled 'neath ponderous foot of DEINOTHERE,
And huger MASTODON.[2]

Still, still rolled on the globe,
But lo!
Outbursting frightful fires!
Rolling the flaming lava forth,
Hissing through boiling sea!
Tremendous thunderings shaking sea, earth, air,
Frighting the monsters far beneath the wave,
Or basking on the heaving earth:
Lo! continents upheaved from ocean,
And continents 'neath ocean whelmed,
While shone the dazzling Sun,
The sweetly pensive Moon,
By day, by night,
Serenely o'er the scene terrific all!

O what a glimpse, to straining eye,
Through vista vast,
Of the far distant past,
This marvellous Stone hath given;
Of times unknowing MAN!
Scenes by his foot untrodden,
Man, future Lord of Earth,
Ordained, in God's good time, to be!
—What! have ye found no trace of Man,
In all these ages past? I wondering asked.
World-wide and deep, quoth he, hath been our search,
And keen and close, and all in vain![3]
No trace, no faintest trace, of Man, or of his works:
But of HIS MAKER'S presence,
His footsteps Awful,
Everywhere.

O, ONE Glorious![4]
Only[5] THOU,
Supreme! Thou Ever Present! Active Ever!
Solely life-infusing THOU!
For Thy mysterious pleasure,[6]
And purpose inconceivable,

[1] See MR ANSTED'S *Ancient World*—an eloquent and deeply-interesting volume, richly repaying perusal. There are extant, in our Museum, fossil remains of one of these ancient Monsters—the Ichthyosaurus—showing orbits upwards of *eighteen inches across!* 'so that it would require a string five feet long to surround the cavity of the eye!'

[2] There is a magnificent and complete skeleton of the Mastodon now in the British Museum. See Note, No. X.—'Ancient Monsters.'

[3] 'Sir Isaac Newton appeared to be very clearly of opinion that the inhabitants of this world were of a short date; and alleged as one reason for that opinion, that all arts—as letters, ships, printing, the needle, &c., were discovered within the memory of history, which could not have happened if the world had been eternal; and that there were visible marks of ruin upon it, which could not have been effected by a flood only.' What an effect upon that great intellect would have been produced by the wondrous geological revelations of the present age!

[4] I will praise thee, O Lord! among the people: I will sing unto thee among the nations.—PSALM lvii. 9.

[5] 'Of the UNITY of the Deity,' says Dr Paley, 'the proof is, *the uniformity of plan* observable in the system. We never get among such original, or totally different modes of existence, as to indicate that we are come into the province of a different creator, or under the direction of a different will.'—*Natural Theology*, chap. XXV.

[6] THOU hast created all things: and for Thy pleasure they are, and were created.—REV. iv. 11.

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Creating all!
Upholding all things by Thy power,
All ruling by Thy Wisdom Infinite,
With foresight, and with providence,
Awful, ineffable!
O blessed THOU!
Or dead or living things,
Organic, inorganic,
Mighty! Little!
Seen! Unseen!
Thou dost develop, modify, adapt,
For uses, ends, and purposes, some
Dimly by Us, thy trembling finite ones,
O Infinite One! perceived,
But little understanding:
That little, by Thy light vouchsafed,
Dooming others ever to be unknown,
But to THYSELF,
In Whose Omniscient Omnipresent sight,
A thousand years are but
As yesterday,
When it is past! as a watch in the night!
With Whom one day,
Is as a thousand years!
And a thousand years,
As one day.[1]

Thus, in the stony volume of the Earth,
Though opened late, I lessons read,
Designed for human eye to see,
And mind to scan and ponder,
By Him who writ that record, graciously:
And one Other,
Also here, in myriad form magnificent,[2]
Both, telling of His Being, Doings, Will;
And His alone the power,
To make His creatures read,
Both volumes right.[3]

Ay, quoth he
To me, with a high sadness sighing,
With gentle Spenser muse:

When I bethinke me on that speech—whyleare
Of Mutability, and well it way;
Me seemes, That though she all unworthy were
Of the Heaven's rule; yet, very sooth to say,
In all things else she bears the greatest sway:
Which makes me loath this state of life so tickle,
And love of things so vaine to cast away:
Whose flowering pride, so fading and so fickle,
Short Time shall soon cut down with his consuming sickle.
Then gin I think on that which Nature sayd,
Of that same time when no more change shall be,
But steadfast rest of all things, firmly stayd,
Upon the pillours of Eternity,
That is contrayr to Mutabilitie:
For all that moveth doth in change delight:
But thenceforth all shall rest eternally
With Him that is the God of Sabaoth hight:
O! that great Sabaoth God, grant me that Sabbath's sight![4]

* * *

—Bevie of ladies bright, raunged in a row![5]
Your lovely eyes, yet gem-dazzled!
Look now on Lace![6] and delicate Embroidery! Telling,
Of pious nuns and ladies high, and all their patient toil!
Of young thoughts, imprisoned cruelly:
And of musings solemn, while ply the fingers taper the ever unwearied needle, at length,—well-loved:
A d, last scene of all,
In sequestered cell, the gentle eyes, dimming in death, behold her delicate toils, decking the altar, or the robe of priest, solemn! severe!
While incense in faint fragrance soothes the sinking sense
And die the melting chant, and organ's pealing harmony,
Deliciously upon the dying ear!

—Now plies the merry Bobbin!

[1] 2 Peter, iii. 8.

[2] This alludes to the Holy Scriptures, of which no fewer than 175 distinct versions were collected in the Crystal Palace. — See *post*.

[3] See Note, No. XI.—'The Nineveh Discoveries.'

[4] Fragment at the close of THE FAERIE QUEENE.

[5] SPENSER, *Shepherd's Calendar*—April.

[6] In the construction of lace, it would seem that man has approached somewhat closely to his skilful and subtle rival, the spider. The thread of which the finest lace is made, we learn from the authorised *Popular Guide to the Great Exhibition*, is the most delicate filament produced by human skill. Its tenuity is so extreme that it cannot be untied, it is said, in turbulent weather!—when the current of air would be likely to injure its continuity.

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At bidding of imperious Steam,
hissing his Will, all irresistible,
While gaze distracted myriads on,
all busy once!
Work on, then, O remorseless Power
All undisturbed by sight of those,
whom Thou hast silenced!
Now, spread attractively before your eyes,
Ye softly-rustling ones! daintily satin-clad,
In lovely form and attitude, the Silks!
Daughters of Eve! how fond your ardent gaze!
Ay, ay! And they are beautiful! radiant, in every hue, glistening, glossy.
—Turn, beauteous high-born one, with thoughtful eye!
Turn, for a while, aside with *me!*
Come, see a WORM,
To whom, my lovely one, my thoughtful one!
Thou owest thy rich and rare attire!
Come, Ladye faire, and see a Worm,
Emblem and type of Change! and Immortality![1]
O, wondrous worm!
Self-shrouded,
In thy silken tomb!
Thy golden tomb!
Anon to emerge,
In brighter form, on higher life intent,
Winging thy gladsome flight, in sunshine, far away, to scenes unknown before,
But that stern man,
Thy mystic transformation intercepts,
With fatal fires:
Consuming tenant, for the Sepulchre!
List, ladye!
Pause, Man! O stay thy fatal purpose! Hark!
Poor spinner! little doomed one!—Hark!
Still at work, within,[2]
Unconscious of thy bootless toil, nor dreaming of thy cruel end!
—Now sheds this Beauty gentle,
In death-ravished spoils arrayed! a Tear.
Let it fall, ladye, and another, yet!
Distilling from thy dear and lustrous eyes,
Sparkling in the light of Heaven,
Which gave the heart to feel, for Man, or Worm!
Lesson of mercy, from the Merciful!
—Mystic worm! Hadst thou remained unknown to man,
Wouldst thou have still spun on:
As for sixty centuries past, so for numberless to come,
Thy golden filament[3] unknown to man,
No use subserving?
Let me not seek to dive, presumptuous,
Into the hidden purposes of Heaven.[4]

[1] In the year 370 A.D. the great patriarch St Basil, guided by information supplied by the works of Aristotle, concerning the instance of insect metamorphosis exhibited by the silk-worm, thus beautifully illustrated the Christian doctrine of the resurrection,—"What have you to say, who disbelieve the assertion of the Apostle Paul concerning the change at the resurrection, when you see many of the inhabitants of the air changing their forms? Consider, for example, the account of the *horned worm of India*; which, having first changed into a caterpillar, then in process of time becomes a cocoon; and does not continue even in this form, but assumes light and expanding wings! Ye women who sit winding upon the bobbins, the produce of these animals, bear in mind the change of form in this creature! Derive from it a clear conception of the resurrection, and discredit not that transformation which St Paul announces to us all!"

[2] When the silk-worm has concluded its labour of spinning, it has enclosed itself in a ball, called a cocoon, of a golden hue, and oval form. The little spinner then casts its skin, its existence as a caterpillar ceasing, and passing into that of a chrysalis. After a brief period, from ten to thirty days, according to climate, the perfect moth would emerge from the cocoon; but, in doing so, would destroy her own workmanship in her former stage of existence: to prevent her doing this, she is exposed to heat sufficient to kill her, without injuring her silk!

[3] A single silk-worm has spun a thread 625 yards in length. Taking, however, the average produce of this wonderful creature at only 300 yards each, and 2617 cocoons—*i. e.*, the oval ball, formed by a long filament of fine yellow silk emitted from the stomach—as requisite to produce a pound of reeled silk filament, it would extend to the astounding length of 480 miles!

[4] And that he would show thee the secrets of wisdom, that they are double to that which is!—Job, xi. 6.

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Whose was the cunning eye that saw thee first,
And gave thee to the tender mercies of Mankind?
Linking thy modest fate with ours;
Luxurious and exacting Man!

— — —

Where shall the Eye find rest, and where the Mind,
In this Palace, vividly bright and vast!
I catch contagion from the eager Life,
Restlessly streaming round:
All ear! All eye!
All sense! All Soul!
And all assailed at once!
Rarer and rarer seems the air,
With the Spirit of Mankind,
Mysteriously instinct.
Lo!—Power! Daring!
Highest feats, crowning defeats!
Achievement, looking proudly down,
On vanquished vaunting Impossibility!
Where'er I go, where'er I look,
I see triumphant Intellect!
Reason, supreme, severe: all Real——
—Ah, yonder, Fancy!
With fantastic Unreality,
Gracefully frolicking!
Puck! Ariel! Oberon! Titania!
Droll sprites,
Mimicking grand airs of Man!
Up, Master Puck! — Thou merry Wanderer of the night![1]
Go, put thy girdle round about the earth in forty minutes!
Off, on thy journey! Lingering not, in this enchanted Palace!
Haste! haste! For our TITANIA'S bidding hath already flown, on hidden wire, the globe all round, over land and under ocean,
And all her folk are looking out, to see thee flying by,
Binding her realms with unseen cincture——
Quick, Puck! Outrun the lightning!

Confounding scene!

Bewildering faculties conversant most with multiplicity!
The True! the False! the Present! Past! Dim dreams of Future!
Lessons of Holy Writ:
Heroes of Heathen song: glimpses of Grecian, Roman story:
Here mighty SAMPSON:
RIZPAH there, tenderly watching, patiently, o'er her dead sons:
Here JACOB, whispering ardently, and blushing RACHEL, beautiful, listening, with downcast eye and thrilling heart!
Here MURDERED INNOCENTS: there living INNOCENCE in prayer, drawing down Heavenly influence: here GOOD SAMARITAN: and there
Meek VIRGIN, with her BABE, for ever Blest!
PROMETHEUS on his rock, in agony immortal,
The Vulture eyeing,
With talons ever crimsoned in his blood!
ACHILLES here,
The deadly arrow quivering in his vulnerable heel:
Yonder, a WOUNDED INDIAN:
Suffering pair! strangely assorted!
VIRGINIUS here,
Who wrote his daughter's honour in her blood.
Here dauntless AMAZON: and there quaint PAN.
Stern HAMPDEN here: and there great FALKLAND, slain in his youthful prime: brave, learned, loyal, virtuous, incomparable.[2]
Glorious DE BOUILLON here! Famed Warrior of the Cross! Conqueror of Ascalon! Captor of Jerusalem! Hero of dazzling darkened Tasso's song!
O, pious Prince! Who meekly wouldst not wear a Crown of Gold,
Where thy loved Lord had worn a crown of thorns![3]

[1] *Midsummer Night's Dream*, Act II., scene I.

[2] 'Thus fell,' says the noble historian of the Rebellion, 'in that battle (Newbery) this incomparable young man, in the four-and-thirtieth year of his age; having so much despatched the business of life, that the oldest rarely attain to that immense knowledge, and the youngest enter not into the world with more innocence. Whosoever leads such a life, needs not care upon how short warning it be taken from him.'

[3] Godfrey de Bouillon would not suffer

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Immortal SHAKESPEARE!
—O Homer! Æschylus! Dante! Tasso! Shakespeare! Milton!
O, ye, enchanting Time into forgetfulness!
Ye Lords of Song!
Creators of imagined worlds, peopled with glorious ones:
Heroes! Gods! Demigods! Angels! Archangels!
Imaged all round!—
But chiefly thee I call, the warrior Poet[1] thou! hero of Marathon and Salamis, telling of Prometheus's fate,
The Impious one! stealing down fire from Heaven.[2]
O ye! your brows with chaplets wreathed, of lustrous bloom undying!
Hushed! be awhile, your lyres!
—Gaze ye upon a mortal,
Erewhile a denizen of this Our Isle,
See him, on bended knee,
With a majestic reverence,
And a sublime humility,
With thought profound, far-stretching,
His eye first touched with Holy light,
Scanning immensity.
Behold!——The glorious sight at length
Vouchsafed!
Key of the Universe,[3]
First placed in mortal hands,
By dread Omnipotence.
—How that hand trembled[4] to receive the gift!
How sunk The Soul, nigh awe-dissolved!
O, unconceived magnificence!
The Heavens outspread!
Suns! Planets! Satellites! Comets! Stars!
Endlessly! resplendently! stupendously!
Ever circling in the void immense,
Infinitude,
Obedient to the mystic Law,[5]
Then first revealed!
See him gaze! with pious wonder gazing——
—Yet silent, bards?
And thou, grand Æschylus! thy lyre hath fallen from thy hand!
Even thou, great Milton, stand'st transfixed with awe!
Immortal harmonies thou hearest,[6]
While sing the Morning Stars together,
And shout the Sons of God for joy!
——Lead me, thou gentle Presence!
My spirit faints,
And endless glitter blinds the exhausted eye!
From the silent shining Heavens,
Descending, again I tread the earth:
This earth, itself small Tenant of the Heavens,
And given to Man, to be, a while, his little home,
Appointed scene of hopes, and fears, and trials:
His little hopes, anxieties, and fears—
Though little, awful, all ordained,

himself to be proclaimed and crowned King of Jerusalem, even in the moment of triumph, saying that he would not be crowned with gold in the city where his Saviour had been crowned with thorns;—a saying entitling him to immortality.

1 Æschylus.

2 Τὸ σὸν γὰρ ἄνθος, ΠΑΝΤΕΧΝΟΥ πυρὸς σέλας Θνητοῖσι κλέψας ὤπασεν—Προμ. Δεσμ.

Any one may find his account in reading, or re-reading, this sublime composition, *The Prometheus Bound*, by the light of the Crystal Palace.—The reader will observe Æschylus reappearing, on an analogous occasion, in the Second Book.

3 The law of gravitation, says one entitled and competent to make such a declaration, (Sir John Herschel), is the most universal truth at which human reason has yet arrived.

4 When Newton began to perceive that his calculations were establishing the truth of his prodigious discovery, he became so agitated that he was unable to continue them, and intrusted the completion to one of his friends. Probably no other human breast ever vibrated with such emotions as those.—Sir David Brewster justly observes, that the publication of the *Principia* will form an epoch in the history of the world, and will ever be regarded as the brightest page in the records of human reason.

5 'Thus,' says that distinguished astronomer, Admiral Smyth, speaking of the binary stars, 'is the wonderful truth opened to view, that two suns, each self-luminous and probably with an attendant train of planets, are gyrating round their common centre of gravity, *under the same dynamical laws* which govern the solar system; that is, not precisely like our planets round one great luminary, but where each constituent, with its accompanying orbs, revolves round an intermediate point or fixed centre!'

6 He could not *see* what his great companion saw.

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Linked with his immortality!
Yes—still flows on the humming living stream,
The still sad music of humanity,[1]
Through the lulled ear, soothing the deep-stirred soul.

——A WORKMAN! working! working HERE!
Unmoved, and undisturbed,
By myriads' scrutiny!
—O, Artificer consummate! exquisite!
On his own fixed purposes intent!
One of a State, a busy state! completely organised!
O'er whose Economy, pondered the mighty Stagyrite:[2]
And well he knew, that on his Master's lips,
Sleeping, great infant, PLATO!
In a myrtle bower,
Some pilgrim members of the mystic State,
Clustering, let honey fall![3]

O, besy Bee, withouten gile![4] on Thee I gaze!
I, in this Hive of mine,
On Thee, in thine!
Dear insect! I would speak with thee!
I feel a sympathy of kin with thee!

Whence camest thou, mysterious little one?
Co-tenant of the globe with me!
Were Thy first Parents
Twin tenants of The Garden, Paradise,
With mine,
All happy, bright, and beautiful,
And freshly into being called,
By God?
Linked in fond embrace,
Unknowing sin, or shame,
All loving! and all loved,
Have Adam, Eve,
Wandering the Garden o'er, among the flowers,
Perceived Thy little Ancestors
There also?
Hath Our sweet Mother,
While balmy zephyr dallied
With her clustering curls, so tenderly,
Watched Thine, so tiny,
From blossom to blossom,
Wildly winging her way,
With honeyed hum,
And ecstasy,
Till hidden rapturously,
In petals of the Lovely Lily?
Anon out flew she! jocund and free!
Fearless of stifling violence,
Though seen the little storehouse of her toils!
—Ah, blithesome Bees!
What hours were those,
To the foregoers of us both!

—A change! a cloud! and Gloom! and Waters!
And that strange ARK!
Were thy ancestors, Two only,[5] also there!
Oft flying out, as thou and thine oft quit at will,[6] this hive,
This hive of Yours, this hive of Ours—
But THEN no flowers! as NOW, to rest upon!
Waters all!
—And didst thou quit the roving Raven, and return alone,
Anon, twin traveller of the Dove,
Then left alone,[7] on the damp top of olive-tree,
Amazed! a-hungered!—sunshine! but no flowers!

Ye ancient, dear, companions of our race!
Man, and his Bee,

[1] WORDSWORTH.

[2] Aristotle was the pupil of Plato, who had been the pupil of Socrates.

[3] Cicero tells us, that it was reported among the imaginative Greeks, concerning their great poet-philosopher Plato, that, while sleeping as an infant on Mount Hymettus, in a bower of myrtles, while his parents were sacrificing to the Muses and Nymphs, bees alighted on him, and dropped honey on his lips: an augury of the sweetness of style in which he could discourse philosophy. —CICERO, *De Divinit.*, I. 36.

[4] CHAUCER, *The Second Nonne's Tale.*—When the author had the happiness of seeing this Bee, he was, for a while, solitary, very methodically repairing one of the cells. By-and-by, two or three other bees came up to him, as if to inspect progress; and, seemingly satisfied, went away, leaving him carefully adjusting a layer of wax.

[5] Gen. vi. 19, 20.

[6] The bees flew in and out, at will, at the Crystal Palace.

[7] Gen. viii. 7-12.

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After six thousand years, of slaughter and of spoil,
O, slaughtered[1] Bee! Dear Bee! Poor Bee!
Ye still are with us, plying your innocent toils!
Ye Victims! Rivals! Monitors! of man!

Tiny Expositor, forsooth!
Exhibitor, of Industry!
Yet, I do misgive me that I see, in thee,
A small Unmedalled one!
In this Our Palace! Hive! Our Royal Hive!

Were ye ordained to gather for yourselves alone,
And not for us, though from Our flowers?
Ye skilled ones! why keep your science, all to yourselves?
For sixty centuries we taste, luxurious, what ye gather and prepare,
But have not learned your art, and cannot supersede your toils!
Make ye honey now, as from the first, ye did?
Perfect and pure,[2] then as now, and now as then?
—How choose ye Flowers? Or do ye choose?
Know ye blossoms fruitful, barren?
Or are they all to you,
Ye little Alchemists! alike?

Go ye a first, a second time, in vain?
O strange Bees! Why do ye gather from the poison-flowers,[3]
Sweets hurtful, deadly, to yourselves, or us?
Is it your being's End and Aim, to gather honey?
Or hath Omnipotent Omniscience,
All Benevolent,
Other and deeper purposes,[4]
In His Divine economy,
Ever inscrutable by man?
Your structure and your doings, little MYSTERY,
Perplexed great Aristotle!
And, twenty centuries since past away,
A mystery shrouds you yet,
Seen deepest into, by a blind Bee-lover![5]
How little thought ye of the amazing glass,
Enlarging to a Mammoth magnitude your tiny form!
Yet, still great secrets in your Sense![6]
Do ye HEAR?—
That organ's solemn swell, is it unheard by thee, *unfelt*, through thrilling air?
Art thou not tempted to suspend thy toil?

Thou shar'st proboscis with the Elephant;
With Chemist, laboratory!

[1] 'In regard to the destruction of bees, it has been observed that no true lover of these industrious insects ever lighted the fatal match without concern.'—*Encyc. Brit.* vol. iv. p. 536. We have similar accounts to settle with the bee, and the silk-worm.

[2] Aristotle thought that the honey gathered by bees was a dew fallen from Heaven; and perhaps he was not—shall one say it?—very far from the truth.

[3] Xenophon, who, from the beauty and simplicity of his style, was called the Bee of Greece, relates, in the Fourth Book* of the Expedition of Cyrus, that great numbers of the Greek soldiers, when encamped in the villages, after carrying a position in the Colchian mountains, found many bee-hives; and, partaking freely of the honey, were affected in an extraordinary manner—alarming the whole army; lying on the ground, as if prostrate from defeat. Those who ate but little, says Xenophon, were like men very drunk, σφόδρα μεθύουσιν ἐφέτεαν; those who ate much, like madmen, μαινομένοις; and some like dying persons, ἀποθνήσκουσιν. All, however, recovered. Pliny tells us that there was a honey in those parts called Mainomena, from its maddening effects, and that it was gathered from the flowers of the rhododendros.—Poisonous honey has also been gathered in large quantities by the American bees.

[4] See Note, No. XII.—'The Bee Mystery.'

[5] Francis Huber, a Swiss gentleman, is here alluded to. He became totally blind in his youth, and devoted his subsequent life, with the assistance of a faithful and sagacious servant, to a profound study of the habits of bees.

[6] 'Bees possess, in all probability, organs appropriated to unknown kinds of impressions, and which open to them avenues to knowledge of various kinds to which we must ever remain total strangers.'—*Encyc. Brit.* vol. iv. p. 522.

* The inadvertent retention of a misprint of "tenth" for "fourth" in the first edition,—gave occasion for a witty jeu-d'esprit by an accomplished scholar and friend of the author, in the guise of a fragment of a twenty-fifth book of the Odyssey!

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What Sight is thine! High in the skies an hour ago,
Still sawest thou this hive of ours,
So vast, and thine own little one within,
And honey-laden, downward didst dart, with lightning speed,[1]
And thy gains, deposited in store,
Thou ever indefatigable Bee, art instant here,
Repairing this thy hive!
Didst thou see, or note our Queen, contemplative,
Musing on thee, and on thy mystery?
Do ye see the stars? Wondering, if Bees be there?[2]
It much misgiveth me *ye* cannot weigh the Sun!
Nor tell of coming Comets, Eclipse,
And Neptune far away,[3]
Yet, art thou Geometer!
Thou Genius of geometry!
With His endued,
The dread Geometer that made the Heavens!
He made thee perfect, wonderful one!
Perfect, at once, thy mission to fulfil!
—Come hither Architect! and Engineer!
With recent triumph flushed:
This airy structure, with its form compact,
Harmoniously adjusted,
Lofty Dome, long Galleries and Nave, Aisles, Transept,
This Hive of Man,
Awhile forget:
And stoop to scan this little inner Hive.
Ponder this Bee!
Perfect his work:[4] is thine?

Transcendent Mechanician, though so small!
Behold his Architecture!
A Royal Palace! Here chambers for the Royal race; doors,—passages, extensive, numerous, surrounding all the Hive: there, Magazines well filled, and guarded jealously; Gates fortified: and within, without, stand watchful sentinels! antennæ all alert, lest spoiler enter:
The hideous Sphinx! monster! death-headed![5]
Him to guard against, the grim intruder, they raise the Barricade, with bastion! casemate! gateway massive!
They ventilate[6]
Their hive! for bees, like men, must breathe,
Breathe all together!
And YE have thieves! and strict police!
Spies! Idlers! working-classes!
Quarrels! resentments! rivalries!
YE Emigrate! ye Colonise! co-operate!
—— Forsooth! Marauding expeditions! Sieges! Battles!
Civil wars! and Massacres — even as we ours,
Of Albigense, Waldense, and Huguenot![7]
And YE, too, have A—Queen!
Living in stately palace: on deli-

[1] On quitting the hive, a bee flies towards the field most in flower—in as direct a line, as soon as it has determined its course, as a ball issuing from a musket. When it has collected sufficient provision, it rises in the air to discover its hive—which it will distinguish from many others in a numerous apiary—and then darts towards it with the velocity of an arrow, and unerring precision of aim!

[2] Man is similarly curious in his speculations concerning the stars—whether they be inhabited, and by beings like himself. God appears to have given him, here, the power of guessing only.—See *post*, p. 32, note 2.

[3] *Ante*, p. 15.

[4] See Note, No. XIII.—'The Bee and the Infinitesimal Calculus.'

[5] The poor bees have a fearful number of enemies to contend with—hornets, wasps, bears, badgers, rats, mice, birds, lizards, toads; but their deadliest and most insidious enemy are the moths, which insinuate themselves into the hive, and deposit so many eggs, unperceivedly, between the cells, that by-and-by, when the larvæ are hatched, the bees are forced to abandon the hive! The sphinx mentioned in the text is a formidable enemy of theirs, recently discovered by Huber; and against this dreaded invader, the bees actually construct elaborate fortifications!

[6] How this indispensable process was carried on, baffled the research and speculation of ages. At length the mystery was solved, and recently. The bees appointed for the purpose, stand waving their wings, with a motion different from that used in flight, with untiring energy; and, to gain the full effect of it, *first attach their feet firmly to the floor*, and by these means cause distinctly-perceptible currents of air to circulate through the hive!

[7] It would be superfluous to inform those

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cate fare: attendants, courtly, affectionate,[1] and guards!

A royal progeny!

And she hath queenly cares: for her dear busy subjects all concerned!

Bee, wast THOU spectator of that dreadful fight

Wherein she slew her Rival![2]

Insolent Pretender to her Throne!

Ever since, reigning all peacefully?

Dost thou remember when, awhile ye lost your Queen?

Anon what consternation through her realm! toil all suspended!

Infants untended, and unfed:

All, all amazed, alarmed;

Hither and thither hurrying, from hive to outer air, to seek your Queen, ye loyal loving ones?

See, she returns! and all again repose, and peace!

I wonder, royal BEE, if ever thinks of thee, the ANT, republican![3]

Musing on thy well-compacted State,

Strictly subordinate,

And one supreme, lovely, guardian of order and of law?

For ye, too, wise citizens! have strict statutes, and most biting laws![4]

Ye pattern type of conduct, policy, and government!

Sagacious! Experienced: forecasting ones!

Lessoning us human Bees, and Ants, royal! republican!

Know ye sorrow, shame, remorse, or hope,—or dread despair?

Have ye a Past, and Future?

Or no to-morrow! all unconscious Now?

And do ye THINK?—The objects of your busy being know?

And judge of means and end?

Perceiving, remembering, judging?

Know ye of right, or wrong?

What right? *What* wrong?

Have ye a Soul, fed by undiscovered sense?[5]

Or, dread question! know ye no MAKER?

From that fruition glorious, eternally shut out!

Incapable of light, all darkness:

Matter and motion only, all mechanical:[6]

Unconscious mimicks of Intelligence?

Or, O my soul o'erwhelmed!

And am I looking now,

Upon GOD working, in this Bee!

Ay, let me pause, mysterious Bee!

Is there 'twixt thee and me a gulf profound, ordained to be?

Stand I, on lofty REASON'S brink, gazing proudly down on thee,

With myriad fellows, clustering on the other side,

On INSTINCT'S[7] edge,

Betwixt us Gulf impassable, tremendous?

Poor Bee! Dost thou see ME?

And note my speculations,

who have ever concerned themselves with the doings of these wonderful and mysterious creatures, that the assertions concerning them in the text are true.

[1] 'Unexpectedly, I one day saw a queen on a comb: the next day I was favoured with a like view. She remained each day about an hour—the bees very respectfully making a free passage for her as she approached. About a dozen of them tenderly licked and brushed her all over, while others attended to feed her.'—*The Ancient Beemaster's Farewell*, by JOHN KEYS, p. 8, A.D. 1796.

[2] See Note, No. XIV.—'The death struggle between the Rival Queen Bees.'

[3] At the time when this was written, the government of France was republican.

[4] SHAKESPEARE. [5] *Ante*, p. 29, note 6.

[6] Buffon refused to allow the existence of intelligence in bees — referring all their actions, however admirable, to the results of their peculiar mechanism.

[7] The word *instinct* literally signifies, something inciting or impelling, moving, or directing, (*instinctus* from *in*, and *stingo*, from στίζω, to prick or spur); but what that SOMETHING is, remains an awful and unfathomable mystery. It is in vain for the baffled philosopher to dogmatise on the subject. He can but conjecture; and should do so with reverence. The questions asked in the text are unanswerable by mortal man; who, nevertheless, is represented as disposed to assert the existence of distinctions, which God has placed it beyond his reach to discover, or establish. He is suddenly arrested in his progress through the dim regions into which he has entered, by the notion of his being, himself, at the moment, the subject of similar speculation to some being of a higher order of creation than himself: and is at length subdued and humbled into a spirit capable of learning the true lesson taught by contemplating the bee.

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Thinking so curiously, all so confident!
Of thee, thy Being, Doings?
——MYSELF! the while!
Unconsciously contemplated by Intelligence, unseen!
Transcending mortal man,
Yet far himself from the Supreme,
As finite from the Infinite!
This moment loftily scanning ME,
Suspending for a-while his cares sublime,[1]
And gazing down on ME,
On all MY Fellows clustering round,
In this our Hive,
Of fancied splendour! vastness!
Yet even to his wondrous eyes, but visible!
I, infinitely less to Him, than Thou to Me!
Doth he, in turn, deny ME knowledge of my God,
And think it to himself, perchance his awful fellows, all confined?
To such insects, crawling o'er this petty orb,
Quite incommunicable!
Doth he muse on us, contemptuously!
A curious race, minute,
From our little Planet peering, inquisitive, out—among the stars!
Thinking[2] we tell their motions, distances!
Weighing both Sun and Planets!
Forsooth!
O, feats stupendous! Feats sublime!

Ah, ha!
Laughter in the skies!

With powerful Sense, at length discovering
We have our RECORDS, too, of these our feats!
Of thoughts, fancied profound!
So wise! Straining mighty faculties!
Such learned Ants, and such sagacious Bees!
Events so great!

Tiny WATERLOO!
Armies!
Fleets!
Ah, ha!
—Ants! RED, and BLUE.
Marching, magnificent, on land,
Or floating fearful o'er the Sea,
And smoke, and spark, emitting,
With thundering sound,[3]
O, so very terrible!

—Thinks He,
That we, MAN!
Know not the past: no FUTURE have: only dim NOW!
All blind! unknowing — cause or effect, or means or end!
Intelligence but mimicking!
Having no soul!
Well-ordered atoms: finely organised!
But stirring dust! machines alone!
Ordained for use of others, only, not dreamed of by ourselves!
Sport of their wanton will!
Unknowing how, or why THIS PALACE WE HAVE BUILT!
Reading no LESSON from it——

——Wise Spirit! benignant Presence!
Yes! I read! I mark! I learn!
I learn, O Bee! O wondrous monitor! I learn from thee!
O deep, instructive Mystery!
Before thee, little Bee, PRESUMPTION stands abashed, and solemnly rebuked,
And IGNORANCE instructed, if it will!
Or conscious, or unconscious, Teacher, Bee!—

[1] Sir Isaac Newton seemed to doubt whether there were not intelligent beings superior to us, who superintended the revolution of the heavenly bodies, by the direction of the Supreme Being.—This was said by a relative of Newton, in recording a 'remarkable conversation' with him.—BREWSTER'S *Life*, pp. 364-5.

[2] This is introduced to show the possible fallacy of some of our most confident conclusions concerning the heavenly bodies. It is now, for instance, elaborately argued by one of the most eminent men of the present day [A.D. 1854], that we have no sufficient reason for believing the stars to be inhabited, or, indeed, of the nature, as to system, magnitude, and distances, attributed to them by modern astronomical science.—See *Of the Plurality of Worlds*, passim.

[3] This is how our great land or sea-*fights* might appear,—our soldiers and sailors mere red and blue insects—to such an observer as is here contemplated.

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Yes, humbly will I learn from thee!
In ONE we live, and move, and being have!
Giving to each his powers, and sphere, appropriate!
Man! Bee!
Our mission each!
Though thine for ever hidden from mine eye,
My mission let me know, and reverently fulfil!
Let me, kneeling lowly, in my native dust,
List to the voice of Him that took me thence,
And made me, in His image!

—Let not the wise man glory in his WISDOM:[1]
Neither let the mighty man glory in his MIGHT:
Let not the rich man glory in his RICHES:
But let him that glorieth,
Glory in this,
That he understandeth and knoweth ME:
THAT I AM THE LORD,
Which exercise Loving-kindness, Judgment, and Righteousness, in the Earth:
For in these things I delight, saith the Lord.

[1] Jer. ix. 23, 24.

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BOOK THE SECOND.

NIGHT in the Crystal Palace!
The seventy thousand gone![1] All gone,
And I, ALONE!
—How dread this silence!
The seventy thousand, with bright sunshine, gone,
And I alone,
And moonlight all irradiates, solemnly.
All gone! The living stream, with its mysterious hum:
My brethren! and my sisters! gone!
From every clime, of every hue, and every tongue!
But a few hours ago, all here: gleeful, eager, curious, all,
Admiring, all: instructed, thousands:
Some, stirred with deep thoughts, and fixed on musings strange:
But now, thus far on in night, all, all, asleep,
Past, Present, Future, melted into ONE!
Dream-dazzled some! seeing all the world, and all its denizens, at once—in every place, at once——
Hearing again the murmur——hum ——the pealing organ——
Ay, all alone!
The very BEES, wearied, are all asleep,
In yonder hive of theirs,
Save where before the porch,
Stand their tiny sentinels,[2] within, without,
All vigilant, as ours!
There's not a breath of sighing air
To wake yon sleeping flowers,
Or stir the leaves of yon high Trees,
Stately sentries o'er the Flowers.
Yon banners all hang waveless!
Their proud devices now scarce visible:
Embleming Nations, restless! stern!
In battle order seeming even yet!
Startled some, convulsed but recently:
But now, at length, ASLEEP!
All here, sleeping grandly secure, serene, reliant:
Lately worn with war and tumult: now
Soothed into repose, by sights and sounds
Of an unwonted Unity, and Peace, and Concord,
As though they owned the Presence awful, of Him
Who maketh Wars to cease in all the world,
Saying, Be still, and know that I am God.
Mighty nations! all in glorious Congress met,
As ye never met before,
And may never meet again,
When ye wake up, be it with thoughts of Peace,
Peace, lovely Peace,
Come from the God of Peace!
O, could this concord last!
And blessed harmony enwrap this troubled globe,

[1] On one of the concluding days of the Great Exhibition, the number of visitors had swollen to 109,915 persons! And upwards of six millions visited the Crystal Palace from first to last—that is, from 1st May to October 11, 1851.

[2] *Ante*, p. 30.

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Rolling through Heaven in its appointed course,
Before the eye of God, Well Pleased,
The God of Peace!

—Am I *alone!* And do I wake? or sleep? or dream?
Hark! A sound! startling my soul!
A toll profound!
The hollow tongue[1] of Time,
Telling its awful Flight,
Now, to no ear save mine!
Heard I ever here that solemn sound before! Or did my million fellows hear, or note?
Now dies the sound away—
But upwaketh, as it goes,
Memories of ages past! The Gone!
THEY COME! THEY RISE! THEY REAPPEAR!
The air, strangely disturbed,
Is moulding into forms!
—Is this Time? Stand I still in Time,
Or have its shadowy bounds,
Suddenly dissolved into ETERNITY!
And live around its mystic denizens!

O ye dead! O ye dead! whom I know by the light ye give,
From your cold gleaming eyes, though ye move like men who live.[2]

Spirit unseen! Assuring Presence! Leave me not now!

—I feel thee once again!
While my eyes clear from the thick films of sense!
Then will I not fear, with Thee beside,
Though spirits glide about!
The great ones of the past!
Aroused, awhile, from sleep profound of ages, many;
Others scarce settled into that long sleep:
All solemn here! amazed!
It is an awful sight!
Man from the grave, around one Man upon the Earth!
Man in eternity, around one Man in Time!
Immortality, Mortality surrounding,
Melting my soul away!
They see me not—yet I their presence feel
Fearfully! my ghostly kindred all!

A royal group! Great Conquerors! ALEXANDER!
Summoned from Earth,
With systems of vast empire, ripening fast: falling suddenly, asunder![3]
Scarce past his youth![4]
His eye glances from Nile, to Indus!
Now fixed upon the hundred-channelled SUTLEJ![5]
—He heaves a mighty sigh!
Now strains his ear as catching thundering sounds—Aliwal! Sobraon!
Again he sighs: his eye on Egypt fixed:
Alexandria!

Great CÆSAR too! also amazed, stern, sad:
Beside him Saracen——

NAPOLEON![6] his gloomy eye fixed now on Egypt:
India: France: Spain: Italy: Germany: Russia:
How swells his mighty breast!

[1] ——The hollow tongue of Time,
Is a perpetual knell. Each toll,
Peals for a hope the less!—BYRON.
—The allusion in the text is to the great Electric Clock in the Crystal Palace. It struck the hours in tones of peculiar solemnity.

[2] MOORE, *Melodies.*

[3] A sarcophagus, believed to be that which enclosed the coffin of Alexander the Great, is now in the British Museum!

[4] He succeeded to the throne in his twentieth, and died in his thirty-third year. He was well entitled to be called Great.

[5] Alexander, in his Indian expedition, advanced as far as the banks of the Sutlej: but his wearied troops began to murmur at the prospect before them, if they crossed the river. On this, he called a council of his generals—and they counselled, to his ineffable mortification, that they should retrace their steps. This was done, after erecting twelve altars, or towers, to indicate the point which he had reached. Doubtless he is thinking of this, at the moment to which the text points.

[6] 'Can you not,' said the dying Napoleon to his physician, 'believe in God, whose existence everything proclaims, and in whom the greatest minds have believed?'

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Upon his haughty brow, glistens the Iron Crown[1] of glorious CHARLEMAGNE,
Beside him standing!
Him, too, behold quick scanning Europe
Wondering: concerned:
Great Charlemagne! How altered all!
He heaves a sigh profound:
Thinking of Empire suddenly dissolved![2]

——Lo, there approaching ALFRED!
His eye attracted, tenderly, unto a Mother's image,[3]
And then, unto his own!
See him look around, serious, amazed!
—O, thou majestic one!
Man, patriot, Monarch! Pattern[4] for Kings and men!
I see upon thy brow a jewelled crown,
With Mercy, Justice,
Valour, Wisdom, Truth and Piety,
So richly studded,
Glittering bright through ages' intervening mist!
And on the distant East, he also gazed,
On India,
Scene of his pious Embassy,[5]
Now by his Descendant ruled,
After a thousand years!
And Westward — Southward — Northward, too,
He looked amazedly:
And thought of millions many,
Her sweet sceptred sway obeying!
So pious, free, both they, and she:
And methought there melted from his shadowy lips,
O pious King!
Strains uttered on the earth!

The citizens of Earth,
Inhabitants of the ground,
All had one like beginning:
They of two only,
All came:
Men and women, within the world:
And they also now yet,
All alike come into the world:
The splendid and the lowly:
This is no wonder!
Because all know
That there is One God,
Of all creatures:
Lord of mankind!
The Father and the Creator.
Hail! O Thou Eternal
And thou Almighty,
Of all creatures
Creator and Ruler:
Pardon thy wretched
Children of the earth,
Mankind,
In the course of thy might.
O, my Lord,
Thou that overseëst all,
Of the world's creatures,
Look now on mankind
With mild eyes!
Now they here in many
Of the world's waves,
Struggle and labour!
Miserable earth citizens,
Forgive them now![6]

Together glided these great Royal Ones,

[1] Napoleon was crowned with the Iron Crown (so called from the iron circle inside, said to be made out of a nail of the Cross) in 1805, a thousand years after it had encircled the head of the Emperor Charlemagne.

[2] The conqueror of the Western world had the mortification of perceiving, during his lifetime, in rapid action, the decay destined so soon to prostrate his empire. Instantly on his death, as if by enchantment, the fabric fell to pieces. Separated into detached dominions, all means of mutual support were lost: and pusillanimous millions yielded, almost without a struggle, to the ravages of a few thousand hardy and rapacious enemies! —ALISON, *Hist. of Europe*, chap. 1.

[3] See the Preface to the first edition, p. i.

[4] The philosophic German, Herder, speaks of Alfred as a pattern for kings in the time of extremity; a bright star in the history of mankind; a greater man than Charlemagne. Mirabeau draws a noble parallel between Charlemagne and Alfred, giving the palm to the Anglo-Saxon; and Voltaire declared that he knew of no one worthier than Alfred, of the veneration of posterity.

[5] This extraordinary incident in the life of Alfred,—his embassy to India, to the shrine of St Thomas, who was believed to have died there, seems established beyond a doubt. See TURNER'S *Hist. of the Anglo-Saxons*, Book V., chap. 6.

[6] This is taken verbatim from the extant poem given at length in TURNER'S *History of the Anglo-Saxons*, vol. ii. pp. 104, 118.

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Seeming in converse deep, and sad!
NAPOLEON! ALEXANDER! CÆSAR!
CHARLEMAGNE! ALFRED!
Through Nations passing, new and old:
Thinking of Kings, and Conquerors, also there,
Forgotten all!
As though they ne'er had reigned, and slaughtered!
Or remembered, but as writ in light
By pencil of a gifted one!
How they muse, of changed dynasties!
New forms of power, and seats of government!
Mighty schemes of Empire, proudly conceived,
Long blood-cemented,
All! all! like bubbles burst!
But Alfred also mused upon his own dear sceptred isle!
His little realm!
Little once, not NOW: so GREAT become!
Grown like a grain of mustard-seed:
When sown, less than all seeds on earth,
But grown, and waxed a great tree, and shooting out great branches!
Yes, venerable shade!
Majestic gliding o'er the spot,
Where stood, so short awhile ago,
She who wears your crown!
Ever mindful she,
In this our happy day,
As in thy time thou wast, of Him,
Her Heavenly Father, High and Mighty,
King of kings, Lord of lords!
Only Ruler of Princes,
From His throne beholding all the dwellers on the earth!

Beside great Alexander, lo, standing,
Greater ARISTOTLE![1]
Great Taught, by greater Teacher!
The mighty Stagyrite!
Thou here! And lo!
The Macedonian melted into air again!

[1] His voluminous works, on every department of human knowledge existing in his time, have nearly all perished. Pliny states that ARISTOTLE'S *History of Animals*, of which ten books survive, extended to fifty volumes!

And Aristotle stands alone,
Looking round,
After two thousand years,
Monarch of Realm of thought!
Awhile, methinks, deeming he held the sceptre still!
Anon came One, who roughly shook his throne,[2]
Anon, Another,[3] mightier still,
His throne subverted, and the sceptre seized,
Transmitting to successors in all time!

Beside the Stagyrite now stood,
Monk, Chancellor:
Both great, both sad,
Greeting, the Three, with noble air!
Looking around,
And then, upon each other.
What converse with their eyes! The Stagyrite, of Matter! Form! Privation!
Qualities occult!
Corruption! Generation! Contrariety!
Motion! Rest! and Heaviness![4]
Melting before the eye of aged monk,
Vain Alchemy! Astrology!
While He of Verulam, as
Monarch, in His Own Palace standing,
Displayed its wonders to his kingly guests.
With instinctive sense imbued,
By that air so rich,
They noted change, progressive,
Space passed o'er!
Progress vast, into the realms of Anarch old![5]
Error dispelled, and prejudice dissolved!

[2] That wonderful man, Roger Bacon, who suddenly blazed a star of the first magnitude, in the profound darkness of the Middle Ages, declared that, if he could, he would have burnt the whole books of Aristotle, *Quia eorum studium non est nisi temporis amissio, et causa erroris, et multiplicatio ignorantiæ.* He who said this was, nevertheless, a staunch believer in the Philosopher's Stone, the Elixir of Life, and Astrology.

[3] Lord Bacon.

[4] These words indicate points of the Aristotelian philosophy.

[5] *Paradise Lost*, Book II., 988. Milton styles the ruler of the realm of chaos, or confusion, 'the Anarch old.'

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New powers, constant up-springing!
Boundless opportunity!
All earth become one vast observatory,[1] with sons of science peopled, patient, exact:
Before that King,
Sitting in shadowy magnificence,
Attended, thus,
There passed his royal Successors,[2]
Or in eternity, or tarrying yet awhile in time:
Owning allegiance,
Their right from him derived,
On noble Tenure held,
To seek the Real and the True,
Grandly intent on that, alone:
Obedient to his laws: not one revolt!
Here, telling of his realms, extending ceaselessly!
And everywhere!
Into two Infinitudes.[3]
The PAST, written deep in earth,[4] telling
Races of life, successive,
Forms, seeming uncouth, tremendous,
Their offices performed, all passed away,
In procession mystical!
The FUTURE!
Ten thousand thousand thousand ages hence!
Predicting dim eclipse, disastrous shadow shedding—
Night in mid-day!
Ay, o'er this Palace' site,
Then, perchance 'neath ocean deeply whelmed!
And forms existent, active, now,

Then, long passed away:
And THEN[5] exhumed
By the remote posterity of man,
Remains of Man!
Wondering! as in
A new Creation!

A moment silent,
O, quoth the kindling Stagyrite!
O had this day been mine!
While the sorrow-stricken King,
Murmured, methought, *of Foreign Nations,*
And the Next Ages![6]
——Great Spirit, THEY ARE HERE!
Thy precious Legacy[7] accepted reverently!

Yonder He of Syracuse!
His eye, contemplative, profound,
Scanning the growth of seeds, he sowed
Now two thousand years ago:
A giant Shadow!
Noiseless[8] motion all around!
Hast thou, ARCHIMEDES, found,
Where thou canst move the Earth?[9]
Upon the slaughtered sage,
Mournful Marcellus looking on! and Cicero!
Thinking of the Tomb, he sought,
Neglected! grass o'ergrown!

[1] To what may we not look forward, said Herschel, more than twenty years ago, when a spirit of scientific inquiry shall have spread through those vast regions in which the process of civilisation, its sure precursor, is actually commenced, and in active progress? What may we not expect from the exertions of powerful minds called into action under circumstances totally different from any which have yet existed in the world, and over an extent of territory far surpassing that which has hitherto produced the whole harvest of human intellect?

[2] *i. e.* The philosophers who have succeeded Lord Bacon, whether dead, or living.

[3] The vast, and the minute, —revealed by the telescope and microscope.—*Ante*, pp. 16, 17.

[4] Aristotle and Lord Bacon are represented as being informed of the wonderful revelations of geology.

[5] Up to the present time, no remains of man have been discovered, (*Ante*, p. 23): it is conceived in the text, that it may be otherwise hereafter.

[6] Thus sublimely commenced the will of this august prince of philosophers: 'First, I bequeath my soul and body into the hands of God, by the blessed oblation of my Saviour —the one at the time of my dissolution, the other at my resurrection. For my name and memory, I leave it to men's charitable speeches, and to foreign nations, and the next ages.' One of these expressions points to a passage in his life pregnant with instruction, telling of the fallen nature of man, in his highest present condition.

[7] The NOVUM ORGANUM, or new method of extending knowledge by means of *Induction*: whence Lord Bacon has acquired the title of the Father of Experimental Philosophy. The Crystal Palace teemed with trophies of the inductive system.

[8] Archimedes is here represented as contemplating the machinery in noiseless motion, at midnight, as it had been in noisy action during the day:—as it were, a human shadow, watching mechanical shadows, in motion.

[9] Give me, said he, a place where I may stand, outside the earth, and I will move it.

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But neither Syracusan saw, unheeded both:
Absorbed, the great Geometer,
As when the ruthless Roman pierced him through——
And he hides the gaping wound.

Far in the West, that eve, had stood,
Before an Orrery,
Two laughing children,
While its humble maker turned it round,
Begrimèd artisan,
One to the other telling merrily,
How went the Planets round the Sun!
And even their times, and distances,
The urchins knew!
But, of the wasting thought, and watch,
Of sleepless centuries,
To tell them that, so trippingly by themselves told off,
Recked they naught!

Lo! on that same spot
Now stood, all hoary,
Chaldean and Egyptian sage,
And Greek Philosopher,[1]
Gazing on that Orrery,
Turning round, by hand unseen,
All sore perplexed! dismayed!
Their ancient wisdom melted all away,
—Standing midst systems overturned,
Consummate, complicate,
And straining highest faculties of man,
Or to construct, or comprehend!
Those old amazèd Ghosts!
With them, behold, the Stagyrite, confounded,
As he sees,
His Spheres Divine revolving,
Vanishing out of Heaven!
And the fixed centre of the universe,
Whirl'd round the Sun!

—— Then came a Spirit, slowly, sadly,
Aged and haggard, with a dungeon's hue,
Stooping with weight of chains:
And he, too, looked:
But with a sinking, sickening soul,
As he beheld the Earth,
In tiny orbit circling round the Sun.
For GALILEO's glory once,
Had since become his shame.
Quailing Philosopher!
Through fear of mortal man!
At bidding of fell blinded bigotry,[2]
Of Priest, and Cardinal,
On bended knee,
With impious tongue,
And tremulous hand on Holy Gospel placed,
And with a heart to Heaven disloyal,
O, tell it not—
Yet hear!
He had ABJURED the glorious TRUTH,
Itself had taught!
And falsely swore
The earth stood still, and round it rolled the Sun!
—Beside him see PYTHAGORAS!
And he, two thousand years before,
Had his Disciples taught,
Secretly, mysteriously,
That Earth a Planet was,
Circling the Sun:
But the People,[3] told
That Earth stood still,
Fixed centre of the Universe!
And these two,
Looked each upon the other!
O ancient Ghosts!
Sorely amazèd Ghosts!
With strangely beaming eyes,
Fixed still upon that Orrery,

[1] The merest child, in a Christian land, in the nineteenth century, has a far wider and nobler conception of the perfections of Jehovah, than the wisest philosopher who lived before Astronomy had gone forth on her circumnavigation of the globe.—*Religion of Geology*, by DR HITCHCOCK, p. 416.

[2] A monk preached against Galileo from the words, Ye men of *Galilee*, why stand ye gazing up into Heaven?—Acts, i. 11. See Note, No. XV.—'Galileo among the Cardinals.'

[3] The ancient philosophers had two modes of teaching, the one called *esoteric* (εσωθεν), the other *exoteric* (εξωθεν), *i.e.* secret, and open: the former were the more perfect and sublime of their doctrines, intrusted to disciples and adepts alone; the latter, such popular doctrines as might suffice for the vulgar.

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Vain, vain, your toils profound!
Fond dreamings!
Teachings esoteric! exoteric!
The Heavens read falsely, with your utmost skill!
Amidst subverted systems standing,
O Ghosts, forlorn, and well amazed!

——And yet ye surely are majestic Ones!
Living in men's holy memories;
THALES! PYTHAGORAS! ANAXAGORAS![1]
SOCRATES! PLATO! ARISTOTLE!
Ye see me not,
Trembling in my inner soul,
So little, and so poor,
Ye cannot see me!
Or ye might despise
Me, and some other Little Ones
Of this our day.
O!—Away ye mighty Ones!
Into the oppressed, oppressing air!
For Littleness, in Greatness' presence, trembling,
Is perishing!
Awful Ghosts, away!

Lo, puzzled PTOLEMY I do espy!
His mind all scribbled o'er,
With centric, and eccentric,
Cycle, epicycle, orb in orb,[2]
Hopeless, in mighty maze! all bewildered!
Mankind for century on century,
Bewildering helplessly!
The glorious Heavens, such fantastic motion giving,
As drew forth kingly blasphemy.[3]

Ye later Ones!
At length ye come, bringing the light,
Through the dreary night:
Long struggling, through the priestly fear
That LIGHT could LIGHT extinguish,
TRUTH contradict the TRUTH!
O, foolish fear!

Approach COPERNICUS, DES CARTES! Unhappy GALILEO!
—Yes, once again, repentant one!
And KEPLER!
In dark night, shining Stars,
Quickly successive:
Nay, all at once, the Heavens illumining![4]
New constellation!
Galileo, with his glass!
With huger, HERSCHEL:
Showing moons, and suns, and stars,
Infinitely far away:
Crimson, blue, and purple suns![5]
Ay, come again, old Ghosts,
Wondering more and more!
Old and New,
With Christian, Pagan mingling!
Know, ye ancient Ones, that these
Stand higher than the ground ye stood upon,
Seeing by purer, brighter light,
Than the light by which ye saw!
See, he comes! He comes,
Radiant NEWTON! all in light arrayed,
As though from walking mid the Stars!
Bearing The Key,[6]
Opening universal Heavens,
Though stretching through infinitude!
Key to be taken not away, again!
Earnest of greater gifts,
In God's good time, to watchful man, devout!
How the Ghosts,
Are looking on!

[1] See Note, No. XVI. — 'Aristotle on Anaxagoras.'

[2] See Note, No. XVII. — 'The Angel and Adam's Astronomical Discourse.'

[3] Alphonso, frenzied by his vain attempts to comprehend the complexities of the Ptolemaic system, impiously exclaimed, If the Deity had called me to His councils, at the Creation, I could have given him good advice!

[4] These great men, together with Bacon, Locke, and Newton, appeared within a century and a half of each other. It seemed, says Herschel, as if Nature itself seconded the impulse given to Science; and, while supplying new and extraordinary aids to those senses hereafter to be exercised in her investigation,—as if to call attention to her wonders, and signalise the epoch,—she displayed the rarest, the most splendid and mysterious, of all astronomical phenomena:—the appearance, and subsequent total extinction, of a new and brilliant fixed star, twice within the lifetime of Galileo himself!

[5] *Ante*, p. 14. [6] *Ibid.* p. 27.

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Their eyes intent upon his radiant form,
Above them standing, like a Tower!
—But I see a shade come over that majestic brow:
See him look reproachfully, and sorrowing,
For a darkened Great One[1] comes,
Who following his mighty Master through the skies,
Beheld, all round, the shining prints
Of DEITY,
Yet saw HIM not; or, seeing, impiously denied!
Awful Worker, midst his works denied to be!
And strove to blot
The record of his Master's glory,
And to efface its brightest character,
Wherein stood writ his reverence!
But now, confuted by Eternity,
He meekly stands behind the injured One, the radiant One,
Magnificent One!
The two, like planet with a darkened satellite!
As though he heard Archangel telling
Of system, system circling,
All through infinitude,
Each vaster system, round one vaster far
And it around another, all at last,
Before the throne[2] of God,
Inhabiting Eternity!
With whom no Great, or Little, is,
Nor Few, nor Many,
Future, past
All ONE, all Now:[3]
Upon His throne, sitting in dread majesty:
His the only Majesty!
And on His right hand,
Bow down! my soul! bow down!
Sink deep, in loving awe!
There sitteth One, that stooped to earth,
The chosen hallowed scene of Mystery,
Incomprehensible, and blest!
That in the flesh the Godhead veiled awhile,
At once both There, and Here,
Touched with the feeling of our Infirmities,[5]
O, see!
Man, and his God!
And suddenly to come again, our Judge!
O, give me mercy in that day,
In that Great and Terrible Day:
O Saviour, think THOU then of him,
Who striveth now to think of THEE.

And so thought he,[6] and prayed,
Humble in life, devout in death,
The mighty one that held the heavenly Key,
Standing now, predominant
Among the awful shadowy throng!
Anon he passes on,
Shedding light,
And joins in converse high,
PLATO, BUTLER, SOCRATES,[7]
The last with only seeming drowsy[8] eye.

[1] La Place.—See Note, No. XVIII.—'The Infidel Philosopher.'

[2] The Lord's throne is in Heaven.—Psalm xi. 4.

[3] "The whole evolution of times and ages, from everlasting to everlasting, is collectedly and presentifickly represented to God at once, as if all things, and actions, were at this very instant, really present and existent before Him."—MORE'S *Defence of the Philosophic Cabbala*, chap. 2.

[4] It is conceivable that this earth, from the wondrous events which have taken place upon its surface, may long since have acquired an awful interest in the Universe!—See an eloquent paper in the 38th Number of the *British Quarterly Review*.

[5] Heb. iv. 15.

[6] In the life and writings of Newton, the Philosopher will learn the art by which alone he can acquire an immortal name. The Moralist will trace the lineaments of a character adjusted to all the symmetry of which our imperfect nature is susceptible; and the Christian will contemplate with delight the high priest of Science, quitting the study of the material universe, the scenes of his intellectual triumphs, to investigate, with humility and patience, the mysteries of his Faith.—Sir DAVID BREWSTER.

[7] There was a great intellectual contrast between Plato and Butler; but they agreed in one transcendent characteristic—their love of Truth. Butler thus wrote of himself, to a brother Divine and Philosopher, Dr Samuel Clarke:—"I have, from the first, designed the search after truth, as the business of my life."

[8] It cannot be necessary to remind any reader of this work, of the grandeur with which this sublime character departed from life: that having been condemned to death for the purity and elevation of his doctrines, he drank a goblet of *hemlock*.

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O, hark, the Harmony!
All of the wondrous Mind, of Mystery,
Truth, Immortality,
And Deity:
And as the Pagan to the Christian listened,
With a brightening countenance, methought
I faintly heard, in loving sound,
Thou wast not Far away,[1]
On the awful threshold standing!
—Have ye now seen HIM,
THE INVISIBLE,
JEHOVAH!
In the central glory beaming,
Effulgence all ineffable,
Whom mortal hath not seen, at any time,
Or seeing, dies!

——Transporting, rapturous vision!
O, art thou gone, for ever gone?
Where are ye, Spirits?
Great and good ones, Where?
Stand ye now,
In an ecstasy divine,
Before the Book from Heaven?
O, let me see your awful forms again!
And hear that converse ravishing the soul!
Opening the inner Universe!
O, heavenly melodies
Only for immortal ears,
And in this home Eternity!

—Whither wouldst thou lead me, Thou Unseen!
Where am I now?
Far, far below!
As out of Heaven,
Fallen suddenly.

Alas, thou here, again! great ÆSCHYLUS!
In thy grandeur all forlorn!
Thy lyre with broken strings, lies at thy feet:
And thou dost gaze,
With dreamy eye,
Upon undying Agony,
Fearfully imaged there:[2]
Vulture, and man, and rock,
He who stole the Spark divine!
Despoiling and defying Jove,
To light mankind!
And, guilty teacher so become,
In spite of angry and deceivèd Jove,
All helpless here,[3]
Lying fast bound,
Vulture, and Man!
—Ah me!
There's come a sudden glitter in thine eye!
Ay, splendid Spirit! deeply stirred! muse on,
And in thy mistiest imaginings,
Catch, perchance, at length! a glimpse—
O, mystery! O, mystery!—
Of TRUE, deep hidden in the FALSE.[4]

—Whither art thou leading,
Mystic! unseen one?
O, fearful flight!
Down! down! into the Past!
One of the Present, THERE!
Flight—flight—soul-chilling flight!
On—on—on!
—What's sounding in my ear!
What Scenes,
—And Who, are these?
In BABYLON?[5]
Lo, People! Nations! Languages!
Princes! and Governors!

[1] It has been asserted that Plato, while in Egypt, had access to a Greek version of the Old Testament, whence was derived that pure and more elevated theology which distinguished his speculations from those of other heathen philosophers. It is indisputable, says the learned Bishop of Hereford, that Judaism diffused much religious and moral truth beyond its own pale; and that not only Plato, but the Egyptian priests, his instructors, unconsciously derived much from the Inspired Sources, in collecting, under the form of fables, allegories, or maxims, portions of truth which the sacred oracles had scattered around them in their transmission. Hence it was said, by Numidius the Pythagorean, τι γαρ εστι Πλατων η Μωσης Αττικιζων?—*i. e.* 'What is Plato, but Moses, in Attic Greek'?

[2] *Ante*, p. 26.

[3] "I, the hapless discoverer to mortals of all these contrivances, have nevertheless no device by which I may free myself from these my sufferings!"—*Prometheus Vinctus*, p. 478-9.

[4] Rare vestiges—vague presentiments—fugitive tones—momentary flashes. SCHLEGEL.—See Note, No. XIX.—'Golden Truth in the Mist of Mythology.'

[5] *Ante*, pp. 1, 2.

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Assembled all!
And in the midst, A King!
A Golden Image!
Hark, a Herald crying!
All bowing down! all worshipping!

On, on!
And NINEVEH!
ASSYRIA!
EGYPT!
O, solemn haze!
SAMSON! PHILISTINES!
PHARAOH!
ABRAHAM!

On, on!
What TOWER is yonder?[1]
And yon CONFUSED multitude?

Again Away!
Away! Away!
Am I flying hidden, safe,
On angel's wing unseen,
O, whither?

Troubled, this ancient air!
My soul is chill'd with awe! with fear!
The air is all gone red!
O, CAIN!
Do I look on thee, with creeping blood?
O, thou First-born Bloody One!
What hast thou done?
Whither shalt thou go?
It crieth all around!
Thy brother's blood!
Out of the ground, Into the ear of God!
First Murderer!
Prince of thy bloody Race!
The first page of Our History, hast thou fouled,
With hand all bloody!
O impious one!
First, to efface His image[2] stamped on Man!
Cain! tortured one! to endless torture doomed!
Greater than thou can'st bear!
Cain! Didst thou see HIM pass? that man?—

One of thy Sons, upon his Father looking!
Didst thou note his start so horrible,
And his visage, sudden so ghastly grown?
No one knowing Him, but Thou,
And his God,
While he felt the secret bloody tie
That bound him fast to THEE!
Did the sight force out the big red drop
Upon thy tortured brow,
Seen by no eye but his,
His ear affrighted hearing,
The question first affrighting thee,
Where is thy Brother?
—Around thee, for a moment, stand
Faces all to thee upturned,
Oh, hideous throng!
Horror, all erect, in myriad form!
Thy Ensanguined Progeny!
Known! Unknown, to man:
All known to God,
The Dread Inquisitor.[3]
O ye bloody men!
Your hands are full of blood![4]

The fear of Death hath fallen upon me,
Fearfulness and trembling are come upon me,
And horror hath overwhelmed me!
O that I had wings like a Dove,
Then would I fly away!
Away! from out this blood-red haze,
My sense, my soul, oppressing! scaring!
A CURSE is sounding in the air!
Let me away! I faint! I die!
All blighting red, around!
Let me away!
O, me! I have slaughtered none!
But These, may slaughter Me!
Let me away!

Thanks, gentle Spirit! from that Terror, ruddy,
Already passed so far away!
My Bloody brother let me see no more!

——O moving sight!
Melting my heart!

[1] *Ante*, p. 1.

[2] Whoso sheddeth man's blood by man shall his blood be shed: *for in the image of God made he man.*—Genesis, ix. 6.

[3] When He maketh inquisition for blood, He remembereth them.—Psalm ix. 12.

[4] Isaiah, i. 15.

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O sorrowful, awful Sight!
Not far from EDEN!
Newly, alas, Driven out![1]
Its beauty in their memory!
So fresh, so fair!
Out of The Garden, in a Wilderness,
A desolate, waste, and howling wilderness!

Mother of all living, EVE!
ADAM, Father of mankind!
Behold your SON!
Come through six thousand years, to look on you!
How I yearn, to look on you!
Your blood mine, my nature yours!
Not such, alas! as yours, when in the Garden blest!
Of your myriad myriad sons,
I am one,
Looking on his Father, now!
——Look on me, sweet Mother Eve!
My heart is melting,
All with yearning love for thee!
O, see thy son!
O, lovely Mother!
Thy beauteous brow with grief is clouded:
And thy faultless form,
So freshly come from God,
Shrinketh now with shame!
Thy eyes, so lustrous once,
Are sadly downcast now, with tears suffused,
And mine!
Alas! I see thine falling fast!
Thou lookest not on Adam, by thy side,
Sunk in grievous reverie, as amazed!
At the vast height, from which he fell so suddenly!
Unhappy Eve, thy bosom sighing still!
Thou canst not look upon thy lord, thy Fallen lord!
Wilt thou not look on thy poor Son?

Hast thou looked upon Thy Daughters, here?

All so lovely! all so gay!
Ah, so gay and blithe! and thinking not of Thee!
Didst thou, timidly, fondly, look on them,
And think of sorrow and of suffering,
By thee on them entailed,
With a melting tenderness,
Of the thoughtless, thinking,
So beautiful, the Beautiful all Fallen,
Still so beautiful!
All passing heedless by?
Thou wilt not look on me!

Then Adam, of the whole Earth, Father,
Wilt THOU look upon thy son?
On my brethren hast thou looked?
Millions! millions![2] Thee have passed,
Sitting, here, so sorrowful,
Speaking not to Eve!

Some may perchance have stood before thee,
Musing deeply on thy fate,
And on Their Own, bound up in Thine.
Six thousand years have passed,
And TIME still lasts!
And we, thy Sons, are here,
Trembling, while we wait a fearful Voice, swearing
That there shall be Time no longer,[3]
All sunk into Eternity!

We are Tilling still the ground,
Whence thou wast taken, Father,
Cursed for thy sake!
Eating in sorrow of it, all the days of our life!

[1] The statues of Adam and Eve, which were very beautiful, were in the Eastern Nave. Adam sate in an attitude of profound grief, his head supported by his hand; Eve standing beside him in a drooping form, leaning on his shoulder, weeping; a Serpent gliding near her feet.

[2] Upwards of six millions of persons visited, it was computed, the Crystal Palace.

[3] And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth, lifted up his hand to heaven, and sware by Him that liveth for ever and ever, who created Heaven, and the things that therein are; and the earth, and the things that therein are; and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be Time no longer: but in the days of the voice of the Seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the MYSTERY OF GOD SHOULD BE FINISHED, as He hath declared to his servants the prophets.—Revelation, x. 5, 6, 7.

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In the sweat of our face do we eat bread, till we return into the ground.
As Dust thou wast, and didst to Dust return,
Even so do we, thy sons:
Hearing a voice, Return, Ye children of men!
We spend our years as a Tale that is told.
Like grass which groweth up! In the morning it flourisheth and groweth up, in the evening it is cut down, and withereth.
All flesh is Grass! and all the goodliness thereof,
As the Flower of the field!
The Grass withereth!
The Flower fadeth!
Because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it!
O, Adam, hear!

See, the labours of thy sons!
How we Till, and Toil, and Spin!
See, see around!
All our strength and wit can do,
Lo, all is here!
Wilt thou not raise thy sorrow-laden eye to look around?
Would it shudder at our Daggers, Swords, and Guns,
All in gleaming grim array,
To wound! to maim! to slay!
Polished bright! and gemmed so cunningly!
Attempered exquisitely![1]
Ay, there! there! they lie
Eagerly scanned by fierce and skilful eye!
But, thou wilt not see, that which we have,
Although not here,
Gallows! and Guillotine!
We dare not show them here!

Thou wilt not look on CAIN,[2]
Thy murderous First-born, Eve,
Standing yonder!
O! tremble to behold,
The crimson first-fruits of your Fall,
Ever deadly blooming since!
O the millions, countless, of thy slaughtered sons![3]
Not for Food, or Shelter, only, nor to Heal,
Labour thy slaving sons:
See Purple and Fine Linen, glistening there,
Apparel gorgeous,
Proudly worn, forgetfully!
Yonder, sumptuous fare, for dainty pampered appetite to fare upon,
Every day.[4]

And myriad-formed IDOLATRY have had,
Still have, Thy sons!
See, the idols grinning, here and there!
And far away is Juggernaut:
But here he hath his representative, Besmeared!

And we have Dungeons, Chains, and Racks!
And our wretched brothers buy and sell!

Hast thou seen here the Sick, the Maimed, the Halt, the Blind!
And hast thou spied thee out, the broken heart,
Beneath the smiling face!
Or noted Lust! Ambition! Pride! and Selfishness!
The hideous Hypocrite!
Ay, trembling Adam!
Hast thou also seen,
Before thee, here, blaspheming scoffer,
Thy foulest God-denying Son!
Seeing through the thick disguise we wear,
Else each might deem, he looked
On monsters all!
Lo! he that tempted Eve,

[1] There is a Spanish sword, of steel, tempered so exquisitely, that it comes straight, out of a circular sheath. When returned, the sheath is designed to represent the joined tail and head of A SERPENT.

[2] The statues of Adam and Eve have their backs turned towards that representing the Torments of Cain.

[3] Scriptural writers date the first War as having been begun by the impious son of Cain, B.C. 3563.—It has been computed that, from the beginning of the world to the present time, there have perished on the field of battle about seven times as many of the human species as now inhabit the whole earth.

[4] There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day.—Luke, xvi. 19.

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In serpent guise,
In infernal splendour gliding
Amid the flowers and fruits of that sweet scene,
Where first upon thy drowsy but soon ravished eye,
From mystic sleep awaking,
Burst Eve in beauty,
And sunk into thine arms
Dissolved in timid tenderness and love,
As thou in wonder:
Alas, that Evil One,
Prince of this world,[1]
With serpent subtlety,
Tempts thy frail Sons and Daughters, still!

Hadst thou not, Eve,
To that fell whisper listening,
Stretched forth thy hand to pluck the fatal fruit,
Bringing Death into the world, and all our woes!
Wouldst thou be looking at a scene like this!

Adam, wilt thou tell,
That dread Mystery in Eden done?
O, Mystery mournful and profound!
Didst thou tell it to thy Sons,
Or thou, Eve, to thy Daughters?
We may know it all, one day!

But while I gaze on thy majestic brow,
Methinks I see the heavy shadow move!
And from thy sorrow-laden eyes
Beams light mysterious, heavenly as its source!
Of a SECOND ADAM telling!

O Adam! Eve!
Twin founts of woe, of joy,
Despair, and hope,
Of death, of life:
O, Father of mankind!
I hear a voice,
Solemn, glorious, sounding through my soul,
Since by Man,
Came Death,
So by Man,
Came the Resurrection of the Dead,

[1] John, xii. 31.

ONE is risen from the Dead,
First fruits of them that slept!
And the Fallen-asleep in Christ
Are not perished.
As in Adam all die, even so
In Christ, shall all be made alive.

Ye Spirits of them that sleep,
In sure and certain hope!
Stand ye sweetly! awfully!
Some around!
A moment into Future, am I wrapped?
The little Here, the great ones, There:
The great ones Here, great also There,
Some shining like the stars!

O ROYAL ONE! that rul'st this mighty realm,
And with meek eye, here, hast looked, perchance
On Adam, Eve,
As looketh thy poor Subject now,
So sadly, tenderly,
Thou, too, O lovely Majesty, must die!
In Adam die, in Christ be made alive.
O distant be the day,
And dust this humble hand!
But come most surely will, That Day,
When He, who sent, will thee recall,
Of thy great rule to give account!
And, as a thousand years ago,
From Alfred's brow
He gently took the diadem,
So, then, from thine:
From thy hand, the sceptre
He will take,
That swayeth gently, equitably, now,
Millions of mankind.
And thy anointed head, O Queen, must lie
With the great ones in their stately sleep,
In the dust awhile,
All to rise, and never sleep again,
When the trumpet sounds:
Raised, incorruptible!
Mortal putting on
Immortality!

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The great, the lowly,
Brethren! Sisters! all,
Adam and his family,
Gathered finally;[1]
Poor trembling Family! each with all made known,
Each there, as though The Only One!
A gathering of Man,
Standing appalled
Before an opened Book,
And GOD!

Nor gem, nor gold, nor silver glitters now,
Nor radiant vesture, nor caparison,
Extinguished in this solemn light!
Gem, gold and silver,
And Jewels of fine gold,
Ruby, crystal, coral, pearl,
Dazzling millions in the day,
Dazzle not NOW The Eyes
That through this spiritual air are seeing!
Enchanted millions!
Did ye never, in this Palace, pause,
Looking suddenly, within
Yourselves?
Did the SOUL soundly sleep,
And your sensuous eyes,
See only gold and silver,
Jewels of fine gold,
Ruby, crystal, coral, pearl?
Saw ye no LESSON,
Written in the Light, and all around,
Plain as Handwriting on the wall,
Letters shining through the eye,
Into the awakened Soul?
Then hath a GEM transcending all,
Infinitely far,
Lain all unseen!
But hark! a Voice, melodious and sublime!
It stirreth not the air,
As yonder organ's peal by day,
But the Spirits all around,
Hear That Voice!
And all arrested stand,
Knowing That Voice!
—Where shall WISDOM be found?
And where is the place of Understanding?

Man knoweth not the price Thereof;
Neither is It found in the land of the living.
The Depth saith, It is not in me:
And the Sea saith, It is not with me.
It cannot be gotten for gold,
Neither shall silver be weighed for the price Thereof.
The gold and the crystal cannot equal It,
And the exchange of It shall not be for jewels of fine gold.
No mention shall be made,
Of coral, or of pearls:
For the price of WISDOM, is above rubies.
Whence, then, cometh WISDOM?
And where is the place of Understanding,
Seeing It is hid from the eyes of all living?
Destruction, and Death, say,
We have heard the fame Thereof, with our ears!

GOD understandeth the way Thereof,
And He knoweth the place Thereof.
For He looketh to the ends of the earth,
And seeth under the whole Heaven;
To make the weight for the winds,
And He weigheth the waters by measure.
When He made a decree for the rain,
And a way for the lightning of the thunder;
Then did He see It, and declare It.
He prepared It, yea, and searched It out.
AND UNTO MAN, He said,
The FEAR OF THE LORD, that is WISDOM:
And TO DEPART FROM EVIL, is UNDERSTANDING.[2]

O, what blessed Light is beaming
Radiant as its radiant source!
A Great Light!
Shining in Darkness, comprehending not![3]

[1] And before Him shall be gathered all nations, and He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats.—Matt. xxv. 32.

[2] Job, xxviii. 12–28. These words cannot be transcribed, or read, or heard, without a feeling of awe.

[3] *Post.* p. 48, note 3.

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And led by thee,
O wise and gentle one unseen, I see the Source,
The Heaven-descended Book![1]
The Book of Books,
The written record of His will, vouchsafed to man,
By the dread Invisible,
Not, The Unknown.[2]
With trembling awe, I own Him here,
Who made me in His image,
With will, and power, enduing,
That Image to dishonour! mar! efface!
And here hath told me so;
And, in that telling, told me fearful things.

O, mystery! mystery!
Where all on earth, in Heaven,
Within, without, is Mystery,
And mystery, Ordained for man!
By Him, the Ineffable! Unsearchable!
O, utter, utter, darkness all,
This Blessed Page beyond!
Thick darkness! Felt!
Darkness impenetrable!
Not a flickering ray, to cheer, to guide, illume!
Mystery! unfathomed! and unfathomable! terrible!
Black midnight!
Midnight on The Soul!

Horror hath seized me!
O Spirit, hast thou left me? Where art thou?
Why, in this dread hour, away!
Why am I left behind,
All staggering in the fearful dark!
All, all is lost.
I nothing know! nor see! nor hope!
And horribly fear, yet know not what I fear! nor why!
Nor whence I came!
Into this dreary fancied Being called!
O, why!
Am I? Or am I not? Is Naught around!

O, Conscious Nothingness!
—Deeper and darker still!
Horror more horrible!
Horror beyond Despair!
Am I resolving into Nothingness?
This Terror! whence?
This sense of Light, Unseen!
Of Darkness comprehending not![3]
Of unreality, amid reality!
Reality in unreality!
Confusion! All false!
And yet, strange sense of Truth!
The sport of mocking fiends!
Would I were not, and had not been! Where art thou, Death,
Unthroned by Horror!
I once could think of thee! and hope! and fear!
Art thou, Death? Or art thou not,
To me—to any!
Yet why this fear?
I sink! In abyss of darkness sinking!
All forgotten! all forgetting,
Perishing!
Conscious Nothingness! unconscious! — — — —

What lightning brightness That
From far above?
From a black profound,
Swiftly rising,
Am I changed, or all around?
Terrors forgetting all, as though they had not been!
Soul tortures ceasing!
I am! Yet as though a while, I had not been.
A balmy air, a holy calm,
Sweet Light[4] around!

By my side again! Thou!
Blessed one, unseen!
Fear is dead!
And all is Hope, and hallowing Love.
See! Truth o'er Falsehood standing victorious,
With falchion gleaming, never to be sheathed!

[1] In one of the departments of the Crystal Palace was a collection of versions of the Bible, in one hundred and seventy-five different languages.—*Ante*, p. 24.
[2] Acts, xvii. 23.
[3] John, i. 4. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.
[4] The darkness is past; and the true light now shineth.—1 John, ii. 8.

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O, precious, Only Clue through endless labyrinth,
Let me never lose Thee more!
Where thou art not, all is dark,
Misery, darkness, and disorder, all!
Deadened heart, and clouded mind!
Existence purposeless!
Worthless, as unintelligible!
And poor Life a dreamy restlessness
Sadly wandering midst a planless maze!

Light of the World, be Thou my Light,
For none other is, but Thou![1]
O, stumbling-block to Jews,
And foolishness to Greeks,
Be Power and Wisdom unto Me,
Light, succour, and support!
Dissolving every doubt,
That Wisdom wills shall be dissolved,
And shedding peacefulness serene
O'er all the chequered scenes of Life,
The changes and the chances of this mortal life,
Melting its idle Vanities away,
Peace! that passeth understanding!
Gently sustaining,
Lighting, all through the Valley,
Till I sweetly sleep,
With my dear fellows, in the dust,[2]
Only my Earthly Tabernacle,
My dust, with theirs, mingled, awhile, mysteriously,
Safe in the keeping of Omnipotence:
Who made me of that dust,
Breathing the breath of Life,
A living Soul become, never to die.
O happy me,
This is Enough, for Me!

So speaketh He, in this blest Book,
Linking me to Himself, Unseen:
Mortal, to Immortality,
And Man, to God.

Mercy, Long Suffering! dare I ask,
All trembling,
Here hath unbelieving scoffer stood,
Deeming the Truth of God, a Lie?
That Wisdom, Goodness, Infinite,
Seeth Mankind, this Book their Treasure deeming
Inestimable, only Source of Truth,
And knowledge of Himself and awful Will;
Mankind whom He endowed, with Reason's light,
And love of Truth,
By Him endowed, the God of Truth!
Shedding their blood, enduring flame,
Millions of men! martyrs, a Noble Army!
In the defence of only fancied Truth!
And million millions more,
The Greatly Gifted ones of earth,
With faculties sublimed by search for Truth,
All other Truth and Falsehood well distinguishing,
Not this, though yet of moment infinite,
Transcending all things else,
As Eternity transcendeth Time!
The Humble, and the Lowly, Great, and Good,
All, all alike composed to sleep,
Like weeping children all!
With idle dreams,
Assurances of Sure and Certain hope,
Dim shadows, only flickering fearfully
On the dread brink of Nothingness,
Into which
They fall, those silly sleeping ones!
Poor living Lies!
And dying Lies!
In Delusion trusting! Fantasy!
Fable cunningly devised!
And foolishly believed, by doting Man,
Foully deceivèd man!
A Cloud of Witnesses, to Falsehood,
Deemed The Truth!

[1] Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the Light of the World: he that followeth Me, shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the Light of Life.—John, viii. 12.

[2] Reflect, saith an old Divine, on that day when the earth shall be again in travail with her sons, and at one fruitful throe bring forth all generations of learned and unlearned, noble and ignoble, dust.

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Transmitting falsehood eagerly, and joyfully,
From year to year, from Age to Age,
Still, all the wide world o'er,
In all the speech confused, of Man:

ALMIGHTY MAKER OF MANKIND, forgive the Worm,
Forgive!
Not for the sake of that foul worm,
Blind, impious Man!
Thus of His Maker madly deeming,
But for the sake of Him,
Thy Son, the Word Made Flesh!
Light of the world,
True Light, which lighteth every man
That cometh into the world,
Open his eyes, to see
Truth in hallowed mystery, unseen before,
Beaming into the humble Heart alone,
Then a Child[1] of Light, become
Thenceforward walking in The Light!

Stay, Ye Mysterious Ones!
Ye Tenants of Eternity,
Allowed a moment, back in Time!
They hear me not!
They see me not!
They feel not, with my feeling,
Think not with my thought,
Nor with my sense perceive![2]
Stay, O, Stay!
There is a strange confusion!
Forms, intermingling all!
Yet no uproar, but a fearful silence!
I did not hear The Voice
That summoned them away!

ALL GONE!
For ever gone, as though they ne'er had come!
Vanishing Shadows,
Within a Shadow, vanishing!
Whither, O, whither are ye gone,
Departed Ones?
Into Eternity again,
Leaving me alone in Time!
—I am alone!
Again that Tongue, sounding tremendous!
Whose echo dies into my soul!

O, Soul! hast thou then beheld
In Time, a glimpse of dread Eternity!

MORN in the Palace!
Hark! methought I heard a sound! a little sound—
A sparrow's[3] chirp!
A sparrow, strayed within these glassy walls
From his chirping fellows, parted,
And prisoned here, the livelong night,
In yonder tree he tenanteth alone:
He alone, and I alone!

Now a faint rosy light,
Telling of the splendid SUN! approaching near,
Beams through this crystal solitude,
Melting the solemn shades of night away.
Yet that light seemeth not to cheer my soul.
I am alone.
Poor conscious half-despisèd
Unit of humanity!
I am alone,
Even ghost-deserted now!
Where art Thou, dear Mankind?
One of Thee, calls on Thee!
Only learned Poverty;
A bruised Heart,

[1] There is light enough, said Pascal profoundly, for those whose sincere wish is to see; and darkness enough to confound those of an opposite disposition.

[2] 'Were the globe peopled with ghosts,' says an ingenious writer, (*Brit. Quart. Rev.*, April 1854), we suspect that they would find themselves quite helpless and homeless amidst the realities of this planet. The vibrations of a gross fluid like air would convey no sounds to beings who had no auditory drum to respond: they would be deaf alike to a chorus of birds in the groves, and to the roar of a thousand thunders — the world would be perfectly mute. Without some material organs to receive light, we cannot conceive how the most beautiful forms, or the most gorgeous rainbows, could excite any impressions in their minds; their noon would be no better than night.' But the imagination will not be bound in such fetters as these!

[3] Matt. x. 29-31.

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And quivering Fragment of Humanity,
In this chilly solitude,
Lying all alone.
O come to him, or let him come to You,
He thinketh humbly, lovingly of you,
And would not injure one!
Come to him, all alone!
His fellows on the earth, they are not here,
None of the Present, or the Past!
All gone, and he is here, yearning alone,
For fellowship with ye,
Dear Sons of Toil!
Whose handiwork
Beginneth now again,
But dimly visible,
To greet his eyes
Who hath kept such vigil here.
Come, Brethren! come to me!
A tear hath fallen unseen of man,
In thinking of You all.
Sleep, sleep, ye sons of toil!
Scarce rested yet, a little longer, sleep!
For very soon, again, ye must wake up to toil,
And many, too, to sigh amid your toil,
In saddened solitude, or sadder throng!
O me, poor me, I am one of You.
Poor souls! dear souls!
Ordained to look,
But with blessed unrepining heart,
On luxuries,
On splendour, beauty, and magnificence,
We must not share.

My spirit droops. Alas!
My days are but as grass. I walk
In a vain shadow, disquieting myself in vain.
I am but as a Flower of the field,
For soon as the wind goeth over it,
It is gone!
And the place thereof
Shall know it no more!

Again, poor Sparrow!
Thy chirp sounds desolate,
Unknown companion of my night,
Unseeing what I saw!
What wilt thou do, thou little lonely one,
If once again thou flutterest in the open air,
Joining thy fellows?

The object of Thy little life, I cannot tell,
Neither thou, Mine:
Yet know I that, which thou may'st never know:
Even thou, poor tenant of the air,
But little worth!
Not even a farthing's worth,
Art not forgotten before God,
Nor fallest to the ground, unknown to Him,
Thy Maker, mine,
Who hath my very hairs, all numbered.[1]
Then we are not alone,
Little feathered fellow Being!
He is here!
But I feel
Alone with God!
Trembling, awfully, alone:
With that pure Omniscience, all alone!
With the Pure, Impurity!
My steps falter, and my spirit drooping, seems to faint.
I have oft forgotten Him,
Not He, me!

Sweet sun of early morn!
Freshening all nature,
Sleeping till thou wak'st her up,
Cheering the sons of men!
Wake, wake! ye lovely, dewy Flowers!
Ye, too, deep hidden in the dark,
Have slept the livelong night
Under your Tree sentinel.
Night hath passed, and dawns the day!

Lily! lovely Lily!
Here! Thou here!
Nature, in the Palace,
Of Art!
God's handiwork,
Amongst the handiwork of Man,

[1] Fear ye not! Ye are of more value than many sparrows.—Matthew, x. 31.

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Himself His handiwork!
—Oh, thou loved Presence!
Blest spirit!
With a last vanishing tenderness,
My heart infusing, all subduing,
Art Thou here, yet once again,
Fixing, perchance, on me, a lingering look of love?
Yes, thou mysterious one!
I feel thy hallowed presence!
And thou dost guide mine eye!
I see! I see
The FLOWER!
Which hath, methinks, some hidden eloquence!
O Lily, I would speak with thee!
And with a thrilling heart!
Beauteous Intruder!
But shall I deem thee such?
Hither come, to see thy Sister,
All so splendid,
In her Palace here?
Why hast thou come?
What title hast thou to be here?
Thou Toilest not!
Thou Spinnest not!
Then why HERE?
Meekly beautiful thou art,
That once was mistress of the field;[1]
But here! Why here?
——O, my heart's joy!

Lily! Thou com'st to me,
All Through, All Down the distant starry heaven,[2]
A Messenger! with Heavenly message fraught!
I see a glory in Thee, Now!
And bow my head, in reverence!
O, Queen of Flowers!
Chosen from thy sisterhood,
So fair and fragrant all,
Full Eighteen Hundred years ago,
To wear the Diadem,
Then placed upon thy beauteous brow,
Ever since, The Queen of Flowers!
Hail, Queen!
Hail, lovely Majesty!

Exalted thus, by One
Who made both Thee, and Me;
And, while He trod the earth,
Its Present God, who made both Earth and Heaven,
He pointed to thy faultless form,
But little thought of by his creature, Man!
And showing Thee, to Him
O, Flower of the field!
Which to-day, art,
And art, to-morrow,
Cast into the oven:
He who Knows as man can never know,
As the Maker knows His work,
Creator, His Creation;
As before Omniscient eye thou stood'st,
Unconscious, blooming loveliness,
He showed thee to the wondering eye,
Of ignorant, faithless man,
In Glory all Arrayed,
Eclipsing Solomon, in all his glory!
King, by a Queen!
Man, by a Flower!
Lovely Lily, Queen of Flowers!
O what grace and glory thine!
And exhaling fragrance, too!
Sweeter, infinitely far,
Than sweetest of perfumes!
O neglected Queen of Flowers!
Benignant one!
Blooming then, and ever since, and now,
Balm diffusing for the Broken-hearted!
Hope for Hopeless!
Faith for Faithless!
Emblem divine!
From thy fragrant bosom stream unseen,
Into my heart, with care oppressed,
With trouble laden,
Sweetness from Heaven!
Wisdom! Goodness!
Pride abasing, raising Lowliness:
Presumption, and Distrust,
Reproving, with a tender Majesty,
GOD, man.[3]

[1] ——Like the Lily,
That once was Mistress of the field, and flourished,
I'll hang my head, and perish!
SHAKESPEARE, *Henry VIII.*

[2] In pictures of the Annunciation to the Virgin, the Angel Gabriel is represented as holding in his hand a Lily.

[3] CONSIDER THE LILIES OF THE FIELD, HOW THEY GROW: THEY TOIL NOT, NEITHER DO THEY SPIN: AND YET I SAY UNTO YOU, THAT EVEN SOLOMON, IN ALL HIS GLORY, WAS NOT ARRAYED LIKE ONE OF THESE. WHEREFORE, IF GOD SO CLOTHE THE GRASS OF THE FIELD,

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Cease, then, aching and repining heart!
Come, thou Lily,
So royally arrayed with Glory out of Heaven!
Thou, the Lovely, ever Loved!
Thou hallowed, hallowing Flower!
Come, thou mystic lovely One!
Whispering tenderly of Heaven,
Come, let me humbly press thee to my heart!
Stilling its throb, and silencing its sigh!
O thou sweet Flower!
See! the tears I shed, and all for love of Thee!
From a heart so overcharged,
Gently by thyself distilled.
Peace, troubled Heart!
Peace! Be still!
Before the Flower, whereby,
One Dead, Yet Speaketh,
Sitting on the throne of God,
Unto the listening heart of Man,
His Dearly Loved,
And Life-bought Man.
I hear! and Make me ever hear!
That still small Voice.

So shall I never know Despair,
Nor see his fell eye fixed on mine.
Poor! poor, mid all This Wealth,
Within this Palace all so glorious,
Truly deemed,
Standing alone,
With Gems, and Gold, and Silver,
Ruby, crystal, coral, pearl,
And all Precious Things,
Glistening everywhere around:
If my spirit for a moment falter,
Lily, I will think of thee,
And living, hope and love, and patient wait,
And peaceful die,
With the Lily on my heart,
Sweetly stilled, in death.

WHICH TO-DAY IS, AND TO-MORROW IS CAST INTO THE OVEN, SHALL HE NOT MUCH MORE CLOTHE YOU, O YE OF LITTLE FAITH?—Matthew, vi. 28, 29, 30.

So, HE Who chooseth Things which are Despised,[1]
Even as I, poor worm, perchance may be,
Yea, Things which Are not,
To bring to nought the Things that Are,
That no flesh should glory in HIS PRESENCE,
By this flower,
Hath spoken loudly unto Man,
While proudest ART, stands all abashed,
As naught! in NATURE'S presence.
And when He speaks,
And wherever,
And in any way He will,
Silence, O Man!
And meekly hear,
Lest haply He should say,
I have spoke in vain,
Man will not hear
His God:
Here, and Now, only,
Will not hear:
But Hereafter, shall.

So, sweetest of sweet Flowers!
I would softly press thee,
With a tremulous hand,
Unto a loving chastened heart,
By Affliction chastened, sometimes sore.
Come, let me take thee, reverently,
From parent earth,
For thou art freshly sprung from God:
And looking here around,
With all undazzled eye,
While fade away these little Things
Of Man, Time, Sense,
Then fix my steadfast gaze on thee,
O, LILY:
A SON, upon the emblem blooming,
Of an ALMIGHTY FATHER'S[2] Power and Love.

[1] 1 Cor. i. 28.
[2] The Father of Lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.—James, i. 17, 18.

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FAREWELL TO THE PALACE.

——[*To the Spirits.*] Well done;—avoid;—no more!
——This is most strange!—
You do look, my son, in a moved sort!
Be cheerful, Sir.—These our actors,
As I foretold you, were all Spirits, and
Are melted into air, into thin air:
And like the baseless fabric of This Vision,
The cloud-capped towers, the gorgeous palaces,
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve;
And like this unsubstantial Pageant faded,
Leave not a rack behind![1]

Go then, Thou grand One of the Present,
Grandly into the Past!
And for the Future,
Leave no trace behind,
But in the Mind,
Enriched, expanded, and sublimed.
Only a noble Memory,
Be thou, to sensuous eye,
Quickly,[2] as though thou hadst not been.
Let the place that knows thee now,
Know thee no more!
Let the grass grow again,
Where grew the grass so short a while ago.
Let the wandering winds
Blow freely o'er the site,
Where shone so late,
The gleaming Wonder of the World.
Let world-wide pilgrims come,
In all time hereafter, unto this sceptred isle,
This little world,
This Precious Stone, set in the silver sea,
This blessed plot, this earth, this realm, this England,[3]
To that green spot:
And, pointing to their sons, all grown incredulous, say,
Here It stood!

[1] Prospero.—*The Tempest.*

[2] There was a desire vehemently expressed by many, that the Crystal Palace should remain a permanent structure; but it was justly and wisely willed otherwise: and within not many months' time, grass was again growing over its site.

[3] *Richard II.*, ante, p. 10.

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NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

(I.)—PAGE 2, *col.* 1.

WHY DANIEL WAS NOT CAST INTO THE FIERY FURNACE.

THIS question, likely to occur to a thoughtful reader of the Scriptures, is thus dealt with by the very learned Dr Prideaux. "How Daniel escaped the fiery furnace which his three friends were condemned unto, is made a matter of inquiry, by some. That he did not fall down and worship the idol, is most certain; either, therefore, he was absent, or else, if present, was not accused. The latter seems most probable. It is not likely that Daniel, one of the chiefest of the King's Ministers, should be allowed to be absent. That he was present, therefore, seems most probable; but his enemies thought it fittest not to begin with him, because of the great authority he had with the King; but rather to fall first on his three friends, and thereby pave the way for their more successful reaching of him after it. But what was in the interim miraculously done in their case, quashed all further accusation about this matter: and for that reason it was, that Daniel is not at all spoken of in it."—PRIDEAUX'S *Connection*, vol. i. pp. 82-83. [M'Caul's edit., 1845].

(II.)—PAGE 8, *col.* 1.

NAPOLEON AND LEIBNITZ ON EGYPT.

'Soldiers,' said Napoleon, on landing in Egypt, 'you are about to undertake a conquest fraught with incalculable effects upon the commerce and civilisation of the world. You will inflict upon England the most grievous stroke she can sustain before receiving her death-blow!' Upwards of a century before, the great Leibnitz, with profound political foresight, urged on Louis XIV. the conquest of Egypt. 'The possession of Egypt,' said he, 'will open a prompt communication with the richest countries of the East. It will unite the commerce of the Indies to that of France, and pave the way for great captains to march to conquests worthy of Alexander. Egypt once conquered, nothing could be easier than to take possession of the entire coast of the Red Sea, and of the innumerable islands that border it. The interior of Asia, destitute of both commerce and wealth, would range itself at once beneath your dominion. The success of this enterprise would for ever secure the possession of the Indies, the commerce of Asia, and the dominion of the universe!'

(III.)—PAGE 8, *col.* 2.

THE MODERN PHARAOH IN THE RED SEA.

'Had I perished in that manner, like Pharaoh,' said Napoleon, 'it would have furnished all the preachers of Christendom with a magnificent text against me.' —ALISON, vol. iv. p. 617.—The eloquent historian, in speaking of Egypt and its central position between Eastern wealth and Western civilisation, observes:— 'The waters of the Mediterranean bring to it all the fabrics of Europe; the Red Sea wafts to its shores the riches of India and China; while the Nile floats down to its bosom the produce of the vast and unknown regions of Africa.

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When, in the revolution of ages, civilisation shall have returned to its ancient cradle—when the desolation of Mahometan rule shall have ceased, and the light of religion illumined the land of its birth, Egypt will again be one of the great centres of human industry: *the invention of steam will restore the communication with the East to its original channel*, and the nation which shall revive the canal of Suez, and open a direct communication between the Red Sea and the Mediterranean, will pour into its bosom those streams of wealth which, in every age, have constituted the principal sources of European opulence.'—*Ibid.*, pp. 546, 547. Mr Robert Stephenson is now engaged upon this great project.

(IV.)—PAGE 9, *col.* 1.

SCIPIO'S TEARS.

For seventeen days the city was in flames: and the numbers exterminated amounted to 700,000 souls, including the women and children sold into slavery; so that this scene of horror served as an early prelude to the later destruction of Jerusalem. The wiser and more lenient Scipios had been against this war of extermination, and had had to contend against the self-willed rancour of the elder Cato: yet a Scipio conducted this war, and was the last conqueror over the ashes of Carthage; and this was a man universally accounted to be of a mild character and a generous nature. But this must be apparently estimated by the Roman standard; for whenever Roman interests were at stake, all mankind, and the laws of nations, were considered as of no importance.—SCHLEGEL.

(V.)—PAGE 9, *col.* 2.

THE ESQUIMAUX' QUESTION.

'I read one day out of the New Testament,' says John Beck, one of the Moravian missionaries, 'to some of the natives who came to me, while I was copying out part of a translation of the Gospels, the history of our Saviour's agony on the Mount of Olives, and of his bloody sweat.—One of the Pagans, whose name was Kajarnak, stepped up to the table, and said with a loud, earnest, and affecting voice, How is that? Tell me that once more! for I fain would be saved too!' From that hour he became a disciple of the missionaries, and a willing and able instrument in propagating the Christian doctrine among his countrymen.—See Dr PRICHARD'S *Natural History of Man.*

(VI.)—PAGE 11, *col.* 1.

PRINCE ALBERT ON THE MISSION AND DESTINY OF ENGLAND.

'We are met at an auspicious moment, when we are celebrating a festival of the civilisation of mankind; to which all quarters of the globe have contributed their productions, and are sending their people; for the first time recognising their advancement as a common good, their interests identical, their mission on earth the same. And this civilisation rests on Christianity; could be raised on Christianity only; can be maintained by Christianity alone: the blessings of which are now carried by this Society, chartered by that great man William III., to the vast territories of India and Australasia,—which last are again to be peopled by the Anglo-Saxon race. I feel persuaded that the same earnest zeal and practical wisdom which has made our political constitution an object of admiration to the nations, will, under God's blessing, make her Church likewise a model to the world. Let us look upon this assembly as a token of future hope: and may the harmony which reigns among us at this moment, and which we owe to having met in furtherance of a common holy object, be, by the Almighty, permanently bestowed upon the Church!

——We are met to invoke the continuance of the Divine favour: pledging ourselves not to relax our efforts to extend to those of our brethren who are settled in distant lands, building up communities and states, where man's footsteps had first to be imprinted on the soil, and wild nature yet to be conquered to his uses, those blessings of Christianity which form the foundation of our community and of our State.'

The above are striking and memorable passages, taken from the opening address of H. R. H. Prince Albert, as President of the third jubilee meeting of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, held in London on the 17th June 1851.

(VII.)—PAGE 11, *col.* 2.

THE NEW MEDITERRANEAN.

The British North American possessions greatly exceed those of the United States; comprising 4,109,630 square geographical miles. The terrestrial globe contains about 37,000,000 of square geographical miles. Besides this land sur-

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face, British North America contains 1,340,000 square miles of water! As clearly as the Mediterranean Sea was let in by the Straits of Gibraltar to form the main channel of communication, and the great artery of life, to the Old World, so surely were the vast lakes of Canada spread in the wilderness of the New, to penetrate this mighty Continent, and carry into its remotest recesses the light and the blessings of Christian civilisation. —ALISON, vol. xiii. p. 273; MALTE BRUN, ix. 129, 143; BALBI, 926.

(VIII.)—PAGE 16, *col.* 2.

THE SHATTERED PLANET.

'It has been conjectured,' said Sir John Herschel, writing upwards of twenty years ago, when only *four* of these ultra-zodiacal planets had been discovered, 'that these planets are fragments of some greater planet, formerly circulating in that interval, but which has been blown to atoms by an explosion: and *that more such fragments exist*, and may be hereafter discovered. This may serve as a specimen of the dreams in which astronomers, like other speculators, occasionally and harmlessly indulge.'—A dream?—Since the year 1846, TWENTY-FIVE such fragments have been discovered! Whether any such awful event ever occurred, as a planet shattered, either from without, or from within by explosion, is probably hidden from us for ever: as also, whether, if it did happen, the planet was inhabited, and by beings like ourselves, who were destroyed by it; and with what object the Deity permitted such a catastrophe. Though the extraordinary number of these asteroids so recently discovered, would tend to indicate their being really of a *fragmentary* character, it may yet be found, as Mr Hind has remarked, that these small bodies, so far from being portions of the wreck of a great planet, were created in their present state, for some wise purpose which astronomy may, in future ages, be permitted to unfold.

(IX.)—PAGE 22, *col.* 2.

THE PHILOSOPHER'S STONE.

The method of coming at the results enumerated in *The Lily and the Bee*, as deducible from 'the Philosopher's Stone,' is so admirably illustrative of the Baconian procedure by observation and experiment, and appears to the author so profoundly interesting and instructive, that he has taken pains to present the reader with an authentic explanation of the matter. In the spring of 1851, Mr Logan, a Canadian geologist, sent over one or two slabs taken from the Potsdam sandstone, in Canada, containing certain impressions which had arrested his attention; but not being a naturalist, it never occurred to him as exhibiting traces of the passage of an animal. He thought them likely to have been produced by the trail of a long sea-weed: but requested our far-famed zoologist, Owen, to examine the mysterious impressions, and decipher them, if he could. He soon came to the conclusion that they were due to the presence of an animal.

After closely examining the impressions, they appeared to be small prints, occurring in pairs, in regular succession, extending in two parallel linear series, with a continuous groove midway between them. One of the prints was larger than the other, in each pair—and both the larger and smaller prints were short and broad, with what seemed indications of toes at the forepart; while the intervals between each pair, of the same side, were much less than those between the right and left pair. Hence he inferred that the impressions in question must have been made by an animal that had passed, either crawling or walking, along that oldest of sandy shores; that it had been a *quadruped*, having the hind-feet larger and wider apart than the fore-feet, both fore and hind feet being very short, and the limbs of the right and left side wide apart. These concurrent indications seemed to point to an animal with a short and broad trunk, supported on short limbs, with rounded and stumpy feet, capable of taking only short steps. The midway groove he at first supposed to have been produced by the trail of a tail; but on further considering the general character of this central impression, as it seemed well defined throughout, midway between the right and left limbs—shallower when the foot-prints indicated a steady rate of motion, (how delicate and exact the observation!) deeper when that motion had been retarded, the animal's body resting awhile on the sand—Owen inclined to the opinion that this midway groove impression must have been effected by some hard projecting covering of the belly:—and the broad trunk, short steps, stumpy feet, scarce capable of carrying the trunk clear of the ground, suggested the *tortoise* as the animal

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whose ancient whereabouts he was contemplating. *Experiment* succeeded *observation*. Owen betook himself to Lord Bacon's realised Atlantis, the Zoological Garden in the Regent's Park; and caused the living reptiles there to crawl over soils carefully prepared, so as to receive and retain distinctly the traces of their transit. The tortoise was found to have left impressions of a character almost exactly similar to those on the ancient sandstone. Had these prints been really due to a tortoise, the stone would have been an exponent of indefinitely remote antiquity, referring *high organisation* to a period infinitely beyond all former supposition, or even imagination.

Since this, however, Mr Logan has, at the cost of much expense and labour, forwarded several additional specimens taken from the same quarter, containing a great number of more distinctly defined impressions; which have been subjected to rigorous scrutiny by Owen: the result of which was to satisfy him that the traces in question are not those of a tortoise, but of a *hexapod* (six-footed) creature of the crustaceous class, of a much lower organisation than that of the tortoise. This larger induction of particulars afforded evidence, of a kind as satisfactory as the faint and mystic nature of the case admitted. Some of the pairs of prints were larger than others, and showed a different arrangement of what appeared to be toes; the intervals between each pair of the same side, and which were much less than those between the right and left pairs, were repeated in each successive three pairs of the prints: and finally, he referred the footprints, as already observed, to a crustaceous animal—or one at least that had applied three pairs of feet to the purpose of progressive motion. 'The imagination,'[1] says Mr Owen, 'is baffled in the attempt to realise the extent of time which has elapsed since the creatures were in being that moved upon the sandy shores of that most ancient Silurian[2] Sea. . . The deviations from the living *exemplars* of animal types usually become greater, as we descend into the depths of time past. . . In all probability no living form of animal bears such a resemblance to that indicated by the Potsdam footprints as to afford an exact illustration of the shape and number of the instruments, and of the mode of locomotion, of the creature that has left these traces, . . . most precious evidences of animal life, locomotive on land, of the oldest known sedimentary and unmetamorphosed deposits on this planet. . . The symbols, themselves, are distinct enough. Old Nature speaks as plainly by them as she can, and if we do not thereby fully read her meaning, the fault is in our powers of interpretation.'

The traces of the shower which may have beaten on the mail-clad creature in question, as suggested in the text, were sagaciously detected by an eminent living geologist, Dr Buckland. They were deciphered from impressions made by the rain-drops falling on the soft sand! and the direction of the wind then blowing!—by the unequal depth of the rain pits, and the unequal height of the little circular wall of each, as the shower struck obliquely the ripple-ruffled surface. It is to be noted, that it is only on a *tidal* shore that such impressions can be received and retained: received during the ebb, and covered by fresh layers of fine sand at the flow. Traces of this description are distinctly visible on various fragments of ancient rock now in this country.—The picture given in the text, of the successive stages of the geological history of the planet on which we live, may be depended on, as being in conformity with the existing state of knowledge on the subject.

(X.)—PAGE 23, *col.* 1.

ANCIENT MONSTERS.

There is no appearance in nature, and nothing in geology, says Mr Ansted, that can illustrate, by progressive development, the gradual derivation of new types or well-marked groups, each of higher organisation than those which preceded them—a gradual development of higher types of existence, in a certain order of creation. So far as geology, in its present state, affords evidence on the subject, the facts seem decidedly opposed to such an idea; and this conclusion is in perfect accordance with those arrived at by the most philosophical of living

[1] Paper contributed to the *Proceedings of the Geological Society*, 24th March 1852, pp. 224–5. This paper is accompanied by a series of beautiful plates of the various impressions.

[2] The Silurian rocks are so called from a district formerly inhabited by the *Siluri*, a tribe of ancient Britons—a portion of South Wales, and the adjoining English counties—in which the main divisions and best-developed series of rocks were first discovered and described, by Sir R. I. Murchison.

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naturalists, Owen—who thus closes his investigation concerning the extinct reptiles: 'Thus, though a general progress may be discerned, the interruptions and *faults*—to use a geological phrase—negative the notion that the progression has been the result of self-developing energies adequate to a transmutation of specific characters; but, on the contrary, support the conclusion that the modifications of osteological structure which characterise the extinct reptiles, were originally impressed upon them at their creation; and have been neither derived from improvement of a lower, nor lost by progressive development into a higher type.'—See ANSTED'S *Ancient World*, p. 54; and OWEN'S *Report on British Fossil Reptiles*, p. 202. The author of the present volume begs leave to commit the subject of this note to the reader's best consideration.

(XI.)—PAGE 24, *col.* 1.

THE NINEVEH DISCOVERIES.

The author begs here to quote a passage from another work of his:—

"Let me now, however, point out a recent fact, which appears to me to have a marvellous significance, and perhaps a designed coincidence. While men were, and continued to be, busily exploring the earth in search of traces of long past existence, endeavouring to establish its vast antiquity, and the changes which it has undergone, we may suddenly behold —reverently be it said!—the dread finger of the Deity silently pointing to the same earth as containing unerring evidence of the truth of HIS WRITTEN WORD. Let us wend our wondering way to Nineveh, and gaze at its extraordinary excavations. *There* are indeed seen those traces of man which geology has never found; man as he existed four thousand years ago; man as he acted and suffered; man as he became the subject of God's judgments; man, whose fate had been foretold by the messengers of God! Here behold an ancient and mighty capital, and its cruel and idolatrous people, as it were reproduced before our eyes, and disinterred from the dust and gloom of ages. *O ye men of Nineveh!* are you indeed already *rising up before us, to condemn us?*[1]

To my mind these contemplations are pregnant with instruction, and invested with awe. I cannot go to our National Museum, and behold there the recently-disinterred monuments of past Assyrian existence, without regarding them by the light of the Scriptures; nor afterwards read the Scriptures, without additional light reflected upon them from these wonderful discoveries."—*The Intellectual and Moral Development of the Present Age.*

[1] See Luke, xi. 32.

(XII.)—PAGE 29, *col.* 2.

THE BEE MYSTERY.

After all, say those eminent entomologists, Kirby and Spence, there are mysteries as to the *primum mobile* among these social tribes, that, with all our boasted reason, we cannot fathom, nor develop satisfactorily the motives urging them to fulfil, in so remarkable though diversified a manner, their different destinies. One thing is clear to demonstration: that by these creatures and their instincts the power, wisdom, and goodness of the great Father of the universe are loudly proclaimed, the atheist and infidel confuted; the believer confirmed in his faith and trust in Providence, which he thus beholds watching with incessant care over the welfare of the minutest of His creatures; and from which he may conclude that he, the prince of the creation, will never be overlooked or forsaken. And from them what lessons may be learned of patriotism and self-devotion to the public good —of loyalty, of prudence, temperance, diligence, and self-denial!

(XIII.)—PAGE 30, *col.* 1.

THE BEE AND THE INFINITESIMAL CALCULUS.

The geometric form of each cell constructed by the bee, is absolute perfection, as far as we are able to judge of the objects had in view; and has excited the admiration and amazement of ancient and modern mathematicians. At what precise angle the three planes of the hexagonal prism ought to meet, so as to secure the greatest strength and commodiousness, with the least possible waste of materials, is a problem of the highest mathematics, resolvable only by the aid of the infinitesimal calculus, or problems of *maxima* and *minima*. Maclaurin, the worthy disciple of Newton, by a fluxionary calculation succeeded, at length, in determining the required angle, precisely. *It was the very angle adopted by the Bee!*

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(XIV.)—PAGE 31, *col.* 1.

THE DEATH-STRUGGLE BETWEEN THE RIVAL QUEEN BEES.

Scenes such as the following were repeatedly witnessed by Huber, the great Swiss naturalist, who, though blind, devoted his whole life to studying the habits and economy of the Bee.

"We introduced a very fertile queen into the same hive, after painting the thorax to distinguish her from the reigning queen. A circle of bees quickly formed around the stranger, but their intention was not to caress and receive her well: for they insensibly accumulated so much, and surrounded her so closely, that in scarcely a minute she lost her liberty and became a prisoner. It is a remarkable circumstance, that other workers at the same time collected around the reigning queen and restrained all her motions—we instantly saw her confined like the stranger. Perhaps it may be said that the bees anticipated the combat in which these queens were about to engage, and were impatient to behold the issue of it, for they retained their prisoners only when they appeared to withdraw from each other; and if one less restrained seemed desirous of approaching her rival, all the bees forming the clusters gave way to allow her full liberty for the attack; then, if the queens testified a disposition to fly, they returned to enclose them.

"The cluster of bees that surrounded the reigning queen having allowed her some freedom, she seemed to advance towards that part of the comb where her rival stood; then all receded before her; the multitude of workers separating the two adversaries gradually dispersed, until only two remained; these also removed, and allowed the queen to come in sight. At this moment the reigning queen rushed on the stranger; with her teeth seized her near the origin of the wing; and succeeded in fixing her against the comb without any possibility of motion or resistance. Next curving her body, she pierced this unhappy victim of our curiosity with a mortal wound!"—*Huber on Bees*, pp. 72, 73, edit. 1841.

(XV.)—PAGE 39, *col.* 2.

GALILEO AMONG THE CARDINALS.

'*Corde sincero, et fide non ficta abjuro, maledico, detestor, supradictos errores et hereses!*' said the unhappy philosopher: but on rising from his knee he stamped his foot, as if suddenly stung with a consciousness of his guilt, and exclaimed passionately—E pur si muove—It moves, notwithstanding! On this afflicting and deeply humiliating incident, Sir David Brewster has eloquently written thus:—Galileo abjured, cursed, and detested those eternal and immortal truths which the Almighty had permitted him to be the first to establish. What a mortifying picture of moral depravity and intellectual weakness! If the unholy zeal of the assembled cardinals has been branded with infamy, what must we think of the venerable sage, whose grey hairs were entwined with the chaplet of immortality, quailing under the fear of man, and sacrificing the convictions of his conscience, and the deductions of his reason, at the altar of a base superstition!

(XVI.)—PAGE 40, *col.* 1.

ARISTOTLE ON ANAXAGORAS.

Concerning Anaxagoras, Aristotle has left a grand saying on record. After recounting the philosophers who had respectively made the various Elements the first cause of all things, and declaring how uncouth it would be to refer such mighty results as Creation to accident, or spontaneous motion, he says: When, therefore, there appeared one saying that, as in animate, so in inanimate nature, MIND was the First Cause of the Universe, and of all its order, he seemed like a sober man among those who before him had been talking at random!—*οἷον νήφων ἐφάνη πρὸς ἰδιῆ λέγοντας τοὺς πρότερον.*—*Metaph.* Book i. chap. 3.

(XVII.)—PAGE 40, *col.* 1.

THE ANGEL AND ADAM'S ASTRONOMICAL DISCOURSE.

These, it may be almost superfluous to state, are the expressions used by Milton (*Paradise Lost*, Book viii.) to designate the Ptolemaic system of Astronomy. The angel and Adam discuss, in fact, the leading features of the Ptolemaic and Copernican systems—one making Earth, the other Sun, the centre of the Universe. The Angel inclines to Copernicus, but pronounces for neither; exhorting Adam to apply himself to what more immediately concerned him.—Milton, as already noted, died twelve years before the magnificent discovery of Newton.

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(XVIII.)—PAGE 41, *col.* 1.

THE INFIDEL PHILOSOPHER.

This portion of the text brings a heavy charge against the memory of La Place; but it is only too well founded. It is fearful and revolting to record of such a man, perhaps the greatest of all astronomers except Newton, that he sought to banish God Almighty out of the Heavenly world which He had permitted him to scan so exactly. Throughout the whole of his *Système du Monde*, (a synopsis of the Newtonian philosophy), he carefully abstains, says a distinguished British philosopher, from all reference to a Contriver, Creator, or Governor of the universe: in pointed contrast to the sublime reflections with which the noble Newton accompanied his revelations. — Thus spoke that mighty one, in his immortal *Principia:* 'God is eternal and infinite, omnipotent and omniscient; that is, He endures from everlasting to everlasting, and is present from infinity to infinity. He is not eternity or infinity, but eternal and infinite. He is not duration or space, but He endures, and is present. He endures always, and is present everywhere, and by existing always and everywhere, constitutes duration and space.' La Place, on the contrary, would wretchedly insinuate that the doctrine of a Deity, the Maker and Governor of this world, and of His peculiar attention to the conduct of man, is not consistent with truth! And that the sanctions of Religion, long venerated as the great security of society, are as little consistent with justice. The duties which we owe to this imaginary Deity, and the terrors of punishment in a future state of existence for the neglect of them, he regarded as fictions invented to enslave mankind. He has given abundant proof of these being his sentiments, developing their horribly-blooming deadliness, be it remarked, in the time of the French Revolution. I was grieved, said the philosopher already referred to, with touching simplicity, when I first saw M. de la Place, after having so happily epitomised the philosophy of Sir Isaac Newton, conclude his performance with such a marked and ungracious parody on the closing reflections [some of them given above] of our illustrious Master. As the scholars of Newton, as the disciples of our illustrious Master, we will join with him in considering, unlike La Place, universal Gravitation as a noble proof of the existence and superintendence of a Supreme Mind, and a conspicuous mark of His transcendent wisdom. La Place would resolve everything into the irresistible operation of the primitive and essential properties of matter; and insist that it could not be anything but what it is. He labours assiduously to effect this impression on the mind! Nay, he impiously insinuates, that the supposed useful purposes of the solar system might have been much better accomplished in some other than the existing mode! He was spared long enough, however, as we learn on unquestionable authority, to entertain awful misgivings on this subject. In the solitude of his sick chamber, and not long before his death, came Reflection; and with it, salutary results. The eminent gentleman on whose authority this fact rests, Mr Sedgwick, has recently recorded, that not long before the death of the great Frenchman—for great he was, though darkened—he was inquiring of the distinguished geologist concerning the nature of our endowments, and our course of academic study. He then, says Mr Sedgwick, dwelt earnestly on the religious character of our endowments; and added, (as nearly as I can translate his words), '*I think this right; and on this point I deprecate any great organic changes in your system: for I have lived long enough to know what at one time I did not believe—that no society can be upheld in happiness and honour, without the sentiments of Religion.*'

The Marquis had also endeavoured to resolve the religious convictions of his great predecessor, into the delusions of old age, or an intellect disorganised by madness; and this especially with reference to his work on the Prophecies. Sir David Brewster, however, has annihilated the injurious calumny, by infallible proof that Newton was always a devout Christian, and had commenced his researches on the prophecies, when in the plenitude of his marvellous intellect—in his forty-ninth year. In the inscription on his monument in Westminster Abbey, it stands truly recorded, that 'he was an assiduous, sagacious, and faithful interpreter of Nature, Antiquity, and the Holy Scriptures: he asserted, in his philosophy, the majesty of God,

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and exhibited, in his conduct, the simplicity of the Gospel.' A French philosopher of the present day, M. Auguste Comte, has constructed a system based on the exclusion from the universe, of a God! It may be regarded as an attempted demonstration of the truth of *atheism*, however anxious the writer may be to disclaim the hideous imputation. "When such a work," justly observes Sir David Brewster, in reviewing it in the *Edinburgh Review* (No. 136), "records the dread sentiment that the universe displays no proofs of an all-directing Mind; and records it, too, as the deduction of unbiassed reason, the appalling note falls upon the ear like the sounds of desolation and of death. The life-blood of the affections stands frozen in its strongest and most genial current; and reason and feeling resume their ascendancy only when they have pictured the consequences of so frightful a delusion. If man be thus an orphan at his birth, and an outcast in his destiny; if knowledge is to be his punishment, and not his pride; if all his intellectual achievements are to perish with him in the dust; if the brief tenure of his being is to be renounced amid the wreck of vain desires, of blighted hopes, and of bleeding affections, then, in reality, as well as in metaphor, is life a dream." The author would close this note with an expression of his profound conviction, that he who cannot see, in the operations of nature, Supreme Intelligence, may regard himself as labouring under mental imbecility, or judicial blindness.

(XIX.)—PAGE 42, *col.* 2.

GOLDEN TRUTH IN THE MIST OF MYTHOLOGY.

However much, observes Schlegel, amidst the growing degeneracy of mankind, the primeval word of Revelation may have been falsified, by the admixture of various errors, or overlaid and obscured by numberless and manifold fictions, inextricably confused, and disfigured almost beyond the power of recognition, still a profound inquiry will discover in heathenism many luminous vestiges of primitive truth.——We find in the Grecian mythology many things capable of a deeper import, and more spiritual signification: appearing as but rare vestiges of ancient truth—vague presentiments—fugitive tones—momentary flashes—revealing a belief in a Supreme Being, an Almighty Creator of the Universe, and the common Father of mankind.——In Prometheus, says that able scholar, Mr Keightley, in his excellent Mythology, we have a Grecian myth of the Fall of Man, and in Pandora the introduction of evil into the world by means of a woman!—According to Buttman and other eminent Germans, the resemblance between this myth and the Scripture narrative of Eve and the forbidden fruit, 'is so very striking, that one might be induced to regard it as a rivulet from the original fount of tradition.'

END OF THE LILY AND THE BEE.

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THE INTELLECTUAL

AND

MORAL DEVELOPMENT

OF

THE PRESENT AGE

BY

SAMUEL WARREN

D.C.L. F.R.S.

"Within, without, and far around he look'd—
How fair! quoth he, how dread."
—THE PILGRIM.

A NEW EDITION

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PREFACE.

THE origin of this little work is indicated in a passage which may be seen near the commencement.

It would be unbecoming in the Author to print a copy of the too flattering Resolution of the President and Council of the Hull Literary and Philosophical Society there referred to, and partly in consequence of which, the paper in question, somewhat modified and amplified, is now presented to the public. It treats of subjects which have occupied his thoughts for many years; and all he begs to be given credit for, is a good intention. For the rest, he must surrender himself to criticism with what fortitude he may.

Two-thirds of the paper were read on the evening of Tuesday, the 28th December 1852, and listened to with an attention amply repaying the Author's efforts to present an extensive and difficult subject, in an acceptable manner, to a mixed and very large audience.

A deputation, in considerable numbers, from the Mechanics' Institute of Hull, formed part of that audience, in pursuance of a liberal and friendly invitation from the President and Council of the Literary and Philosophical Society: a circumstance which afforded the Author peculiar gratification.

INNER TEMPLE, LONDON,
January 1853.

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MR PRESIDENT,

AND LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I HOPE that the special relation in which I stand towards this populous borough, and its ancient town and corporation,*—a town which has numbered among those of its citizens the noble names of Andrew Marvel, and William Wilberforce—will, together with a fact which I shall presently mention, satisfactorily account for my appearance before you this evening, in a position to myself at once new and responsible. As a member of the Bar, and also exercising judicial functions among you, such a position as I now occupy is intended, I can assure you, to be a solitary one in my lifetime; and it is also an embarrassing one, because not in unison with my professional habits and objects. On the occasion, however, of my first judicial visit to this town, in last October, I received an unexpected and earnest request from the President and Council of the Literary and Philosophical Society of this place, to read a paper before the Society, and on any subject which I might select. After much consideration, I expressed my willingness to do so, and chose the subject now before us. Some time afterwards, I was honoured by receiving a unanimous resolution of the President and Council, soliciting me "to take steps, by anticipation, to commit the paper to the press, in order that it may be perused, at as early a period as possible, by those who cannot hear the paper read—with a view to its extended usefulness." I own that I was not a little affected by so signal a mark of confidence; and have already, as far as I have been able, complied with the request.

As I feel it a very responsible honour, under these circumstances, to appear before you, so I beg your indulgence, and your sustained attention, while I endeavour to lay before you, though, it may be, very imperfectly, some of the results of nearly a quarter of a century's observation and reflection, on many subjects of the highest interest and importance. It is in vain for me, however, as it would be foolish, to attempt to burthen you with all the dismaying mass of manuscript which I hold in my hand; and, finally, before starting on our extensive and venturous expedition, I have to assure you that nothing shall fall from me calculated to provoke difference of opinion, except so far as is unavoidable in addressing any mixed and independent auditory. Above all things, I shall eschew everything even approaching to a political or sectarian character. This, indeed, your rules discreetly prohibit; and to those rules my own purpose and feelings dictate a rigorous adherence.

Well, then, we are here assembled,

* The town and county of Kingston-upon-Hull, commonly called Hull, was constituted a free borough, with extensive immunities, under a charter of Edward I., dated the 1st April 1299. For upwards of a century, however, before that time, it had been a seaport of considerable mercantile importance.—See Frost's Notices relative to the early history of the town and port of Hull, [A.D. 1827], and *The Encyclopædia Britannica*, tit. "Hull."

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only a day or two after Christmas-day!—Let us regard the season—the occasion—as a halcyon interval of repose, in which our cheerfulness is blended with solemnity, while reflecting upon that event, so sublime and awful in the estimation of all Christians, which invests the close of every year with, as it were, a grand halo. The eager, noisy world, with all its wild passions, and the transient pursuits which stimulate them, is, for a while, happily shut out; leaving us to breathe a serene atmosphere.

Be still, ye winds! ye zephyrs, cease to blow,
While music most melodious meets my ear—

the "still sad music of humanity," which may be heard echoing while we fix our eyes upon MAN and his mysterious manifestations—in his momentous relations to the Past, the Present, and the Future.

May I, however, in a more cheery spirit, make a passing allusion to a topic occasionally exciting a lively interest out of doors?—the budget of our Chancellor of the Exchequer! Let me conceive myself to have been installed your Chancellor of the Exchequer *intellectual;* and here, at your service, is *my* Budget; but I shall be forced to deal very summarily with the income and expenditure of THOUGHT—its Resources—its Ways and Means—and the circulating medium of that thought, which is its language or literature. I cannot, alas! hold out the hopes of taking off any taxes, but, on the contrary, must impose a somewhat heavy one *on your attention!* My Budget will deal with a vast variety of topics—some of them of great delicacy, difficulty, and moment; topics coming home to the business and bosom of each of us, and challenging our anxious consideration. We cannot survey, for the purpose of practically estimating, *the intellectual and moral development of the age* in which we live and are playing our parts—every man and woman of us having his or her own responsible mission to perform—without attempting gravely and comprehensively to consider man in ordained relation to his power, and his knowledge, his objects, his sayings and his doings, his position past and present, and his destiny. It is difficult to imagine any period for making such an attempt more interesting and inviting than the present—one, in many respects, very dazzling; and in others, exciting concern and surprise. In one direction, it may be that we see a vast space passed over in a little time; in another, a long time with scarce any space passed over at all; though in each case human intellect has been occupied and taxed to its uttermost apparent capabilities. These are matters justifying, and even demanding, attentive consideration. It will be necessary, with this view, to soar high and far, but swiftly, into the stupendous starry solitude of space; to descend, as far as man's limited means allow him, into the interior of the earth; and, again, to travel all round its surface, in order to ascertain what we know, or think we know, of the human and animal denizens of that earth, and of the nature and relations of that earth itself; and, finally, to penetrate, as far as we may, and with a tender respect, into that mystery of mysteries, MAN himself.* And this, not with the view of attempting an ostentatious display of his doings, his discoveries—of the exploits of his genius, which might serve only to inflate a foolish pride, to generate spurious motives to action, and, in short, and above all, induce a fatal—I repeat, a fatal confusion between MEANS and ENDS; which last words contain the key of all that is to follow. Let us, on the contrary, try to look at Man, as he has been told by God *that he is,*—placed upon this planet, by a direct incomprehensible act of creation, by that God, whose image, though now darkened, he bears, and between whom and himself there exist relations inconceivably awful and momentous. Those relations it is surely of infinite consequence to us to ascertain accurately, as far as we can; because they directly and permanently affect human conduct and destiny. On a due perception, in-

* "Alas!" says Coleridge, speaking of the difficulty of fixing the attention of men on the world within them, "the largest part of mankind are nowhere greater strangers than at home."

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deed, of those relations, duly acted upon, rest the true and only enduring dignity of human nature, the actual inevitable difference between one man and another, and the only real uses and aims of intellect and knowledge. I hope to place in a distinct point of view the proposition, that as it is possible for a man to have a prodigious knowledge of the facts of philosophy, without a glimmering of its spirit; so the human intellect may be endowed with great strength and capacity, be consummately trained in the exercise of its faculties, and richly stored with the fruits of literature and philosophy, and yet its possessor be all the while mentally purblind—nay more, destitute of an atom of moral worth: serving, to the eye of the Christian philosopher and moralist, only to illustrate the deplorable, degrading, and perilous consequences of a want of it in the individual case, and, in the general one, to reveal to us a sort of moral and intellectual chaos. I say intellectual as well as moral. And in the former case, why should I not call up for an instant, the spectre of La Place, whose great intellect could occupy itself during a lifetime with the sublimest truths of astronomy, to no better purpose than to deny the existence of the Almighty Maker of the universe; impiously to insinuate that the supposed useful purposes of our system could have been accomplished otherwise, and better, than at present! and, finally, to discard religion, and the sanctions which it derives from a future existence, and its conditions, as a cruel imposture practised upon the ignorant credulity of mankind!* Believe me, there are real relations between physical and moral science—there are profound relations between intellect and morality, involving everything that concerns the highest interests of mankind; and it cannot be otherwise than interesting and important, to seek for every ray of light which may contribute towards showing us the real nature of these relations. The General is made up of the Particular—the Whole of its parts; and there may be personal consequences depending upon the minutest moral actions of mankind, as real, great, and permanent, as the causes entailing them *appeared* trivial and temporary, and were, in fact, while operating, wholly *unperceived*. The old philosophers said, that Nature does nothing in vain, in the physical world; and so, in the mighty moral economy under which we have been placed by our Almighty Maker, let us rest satisfied that nothing has been done by Him in vain, and perhaps also, nothing by the creatures whom He has made the subjects of that economy. The possession and use of intellect entail great moral and religious responsibilities; and between one who thinks otherwise, and those with whom I think, there is fixed a great gulf, in respect of speculation, action, and conduct; there exists a distinction involving the entire theory and basis of morality, its Motives and Sanctions, its Means and Ends.

Do not, however, be startled by this sudden glimpse into gloom—into the profound abysses of abstract speculation, which I now quit for a time; but remember, that these considerations constitute a reality all the while, surrounding us even as the atmosphere envelops the earth: and let us, in passing on to lighter subjects, and hovering over them for a time, carry with us, nevertheless, an oracular saying of Bishop Jeremy Taylor, "Whatever we talk, things are *as they are*, not as we grant, dispute, or hope; depending on neither our affirmative nor negative, but upon

* It is right, however, here to state that M. La Place, not long before his death, intimated to a distinguished English philosopher (Professor Sedgwick) a great change of opinion. Having spoken to him earnestly on the *religious* character of our endowments, and course of academical study, M. La Place added: "I think this right; and on this point I deprecate any great organic changes in your system; for I have lived long enough to know—what at one time I did not believe—that *no society can be upheld in happiness and honour, without the sentiments of religion.*" This remarkable statement is made on the authority of Professor Sedgwick himself, who says it is in the very words of M. La Place, "as nearly as I can translate them."—See the *Discourse on the Studies of the University of Cambridge*, 5th edition.

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the rate and value which GOD sets upon things."*

Permit me here to say what is sought to be indicated by the word Development. I use it in its strict etymological signification; that is to say, an 'opening,'† a 'showing forth,' a 'displaying' of the intellectual and moral condition of man in the present age. And—you will say—is this to be done in a single evening's paper? It sounds, indeed, as hopeless as the notion of compressing the *Iliad* within a nutshell. Nevertheless, the attempt must be made to survey this vast field, however rapidly, and however hard it may be to know where to begin. The great object is for the observer to select a *right point of view*. On that depends everything; for there *is* a point from which everything within and without us is order and loveliness, and another from which all is contradiction and confusion. There is a string which, "*untuned*," we may well call out fearfully—

"Hark! what discord follows!"

I shall glance first at our LITERATURE‡—the current coin, so to speak, of the realm Intellectual—the circulating medium of thought, by which Intellect communicates with Intellect, in both the present and past ages. And it is one pre-eminent characteristic of the present age, that though the issue of this coin is infinitely greater than the world has ever seen before, it yet scarcely equals our requirements. The mint is kept in incessant action, though its capabilities have been immensely augmented! Let me now, however, advert, for a moment, to the metal out of which this coin is made—our language. Is *gold* pouring into our cellars as it is into those of the Bank of England?

Our English language is a noble one, worthy of the most jealous guardianship; and the slightest tendency to deteriorate it, by writing or speaking it in a slovenly way, or introducing, from any sort of conceit, and to catch a momentary notoriety, vulgar novelties, ought to be treated as attempts at defilement and disfigurement; and should entail instant critical censure and contempt, on the part of those who are interested in handing down our language, in all its purity, beauty, strength, and dignity, to posterity, as it were a sacred heir-loom. That language we ought to be every day more and more solicitous thus to cherish and protect! for it is daily and hourly spreading over the whole habitable globe, and seems destined to gain a complete ascendancy over all others now spoken and written. Look into the New World, and see there, in the Far West, the mighty daughter of a mighty mother, of whom she is, and ought to be, proud! She can, when she pleases, speak the language of that mother with as much elegance and force as her parent, towards whom she must often turn with yearning fondness and pride.—Ah, what are the feelings with which, as I have several times been assured by themselves, our gifted brethren from the West first catch sight of the white cliffs of Albion! They often watch, for that purpose, through the live-long night; and when Old England becomes visible, even as a dim speck beyond the waters, a thousand and a thousand times have their tears gushed forth, while they gazed, in silent

* Works, vol. xi. p. 198, (Bishop Heber's edition).

† "*Desveloper*," "*developper*,"—perhaps from *deorsum volvere*, to roll back, to open, unwrap, or unfold anything *rolled* in a volume.—See *Richardson's Dictionary*.

‡ The etymology of this word is not by any means determined. It is traced clearly through the French, Italian, and Spanish languages, to the Latin *litera*; which may perhaps, as suggested by Mr Richardson, be taken from *litum*, the past participle of *linere*, to *smear*; as one of the earliest modes of writing was by graving the characters upon tablets, which were *smeared* over or covered with wax.—(*Pliny*, lib. xiii. c. 11). These wax tablets were written on with an instrument of iron or brass, (*stilus* or *stylus*), resembling a pencil in size and shape, sharpened at one end, the other extremity of it being flat and circular, for the purpose of obliterating what had been written, and rendering the waxen surface smooth again. A picture found in Herculaneum, and of which an engraving is given in Dr Smith's Dictionary of Grecian and Roman Antiquities, represents a Roman with his tablet and "*stilus*;" whence the English word "style."

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tenderness, on the little island from which came their own ancestors—in which its own—*their* own—SHAKESPEARE was born; that island which he so dearly loved, and has rendered immortal; of which he spoke in very moving words, that make an Englishman's heart thrill when he hears them—as "this sceptred isle"—"this little world"—

This precious stone, set in the silver sea—
This blessed plot, this earth, this realm, this England!
This land of such dear souls—this dear, dear land?*

So wrote Shakespeare, with quivering pen, in Queen Elizabeth's day; and so, nearly three centuries afterwards, read we, with quivering hearts, in Queen Victoria's day—the Sovereign Lady of this same dear sceptred isle—we, who are able, and resolved, that, with God's blessing on our stout hearts and strong arms, it shall pass down for centuries hence to her descendants, and to our descendants—aye shall that "precious stone, set in the silver sea"—its guardians knowing neither fear nor foe—or, knowing, only to defy! Could I call up Shakespeare before you, how would you tremble with emotion as you heard that noble spirit speak his own words:

This England never did, nor never shall,
Lie at the proud foot of a conqueror,—
But when it first did help to wound itself.
Come the three corners of the world in arms,
And we shall shock them! Naught shall make us rue,
If England to itself do rest but true! †

Who can listen to this, and not feel pride on reflecting, that perhaps at this very moment our brethren and sisters at the antipodes may be reciting it, and thinking, with swelling hearts, of their little island home, and of us whom they have left behind in it? Let me sum up all that an Englishman can say, in a line—a little varied, it is true—of our great Poet himself—

One touch of *Shakespeare* makes the whole world kin!

And shall not the descendants and countrymen of Shakespeare and Milton, and so many other illustrious writers of our glorious Saxon language, alike in prose and in verse, strive to protect that language from pollution, and hand it down pure as we received it? Or shall they calmly contemplate its being rapidly deteriorated by those who were never able to appreciate that purity, and are consequently indifferent about preserving it? I repeat it, that our fast-quitting brethren and sisters—God go with them!—are carrying, in increasing numbers, our language into every region of the globe; a fact which of itself should suffice to quicken our vigilance to keep the source of that language pure. "The treasures of our tongue," says one who has conferred inestimable service on that tongue,‡ "are spread over continents, scattered among islands in the northern and the southern hemisphere, from 'the unformed Occident to the strange shores of unknowing nations in the East.' The sun, indeed, now never sets upon the empire of Great Britain. Not one hour of the twenty-four, in which the earth completes her diurnal revolution—not one round of the minute-hand of the dial, is allowed to pass, in which, on some portion of the surface of the globe, the air is not filled 'with accents that are ours.' They are heard in the ordinary transactions of life, or in the administration of law, or in the deliberations of the senate-house or council-chamber, in the offices of private devotion, or in the public observance of the rites and duties of a common faith."

This noble language, finally, enshrines reverentially the Holy volume, the oracles of God, which His pious

* *Richard II.* Act ii. scene 1.
† *King John*, conclusion.

‡ Dr Richardson, by his "New Dictionary of the English Language; combining Explanation with Etymology, and illustrated by Quotations from the best Authors, arranged chronologically from the earliest period to the beginning of the present century." 2 vols. 4to. This admirable work constitutes almost a library of English books in itself; and its learned and indefatigable compiler has recently received a fitting recognition of his merits, by a pension, conferred through the Earl of Derby, then Prime Minister, by her Majesty, (A.D. 1852).

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servants in this island are disseminating, in countless millions of copies, among mankind in every quarter of the globe. Should not that of itself be a grand incentive to us, both speakers and writers, to do our best to preserve the identity of that language, by keeping its choice treasures, as models of simplicity, strength, and beauty, constantly before our eyes, and in our thoughts? Oh! let us imitate the Greeks and Romans in the noble and emulous care with which they developed and preserved their renowned languages, which have consequently come down to us in unimpaired freshness, beauty, and splendour, amidst

"The waves and weathers of time—"

come down to us in such guise, as to leave us almost in doubt which to admire more—their thought, or the exquisite language which conveys it!

I say these things only for the advantage of the younger portions of this large audience, and of those who may hereafter think it worth while to read what I am now uttering; and to them, would that I could speak trumpet-tongued on this subject, which has always lain near my heart. Let them (I mean the younger folk) believe the assertion, which will be readily supported by the greatest masters of our language, that to write English with vigour and purity is really a high, and also a rare, accomplishment: much rarer, indeed, than it ought to be, and would be, if youthful aspirants would only conceive rightly, and bear ever in mind, the importance of the object, and the efforts indispensable to secure it. This accomplishment involves, in my opinion, early and careful culture, continued attention, and sedulous practice, familiarity with the choicest models, and no inconsiderable degree of natural taste and refinement. One thus endowed and accomplished must sometimes shudder at the extent to which he may see our language vitiated by needless and injurious incorporations of foreign words and idioms, and vulgar, fleeting colloquialities, of our own viler growth, which are utterly inconsistent with the dignity of high and enduring literature.* Any man of talent, or more especially of *genius*, (a distinction difficult to put into words, but real and great, and not in degree, but kind), who disregards these considerations, offends the genius of English letters; and indeed, let him rest assured, commits a sort of literary suicide. He may be unconsciously disgusting thousands — nay, tens of thousands, of persons competent to detect, at an indignant glance, these impertinent and vulgar departures from propriety: familiar with the finest models of ancient and modern literature; persons, in short, whose estimation constitutes the true and only pathway to posterity. If their *fiat*, or *imprimatur*, be withheld, (and it is given only after a stern scrutiny), the eager ambitious traveller will by-and-by find out, to his mortification, that he has started *without his passport*. I am not now speaking simply of the numerous professed and habitual critics of the present day, who constitute, as they ought to do, a vigilant and expert literary police, doubtlessly restraining many an intending offender; but also of the great body of readers,—ay, of either sex—who feel no inclination to express their refined criticisms in print, or become members of what are called "literary circles," which too often contain only second, third, or fourth-rate aspirants to literary reputation, none of whom experience the promptings of conscious and independent strength, and cannot stand alone, but combine, in little efforts, too often only to disparage those who can, and do. The higher class, to which I am alluding, exercise, nevertheless, an influence which may, in one respect, be compared to Gravitation, which is unseen, unheard, but irresistible; and all young writers should consider this, before they rush into a presence so

* It is one feature of Richardson's Dictionary, that he never gives words of this description, but those only which are supported by the carefully-selected writers, whom he cites in every instance, commencing with the close of the thirteenth, and ending with the commencement of the present century.

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formidable. I hope it may not be deemed presumptuous, if one venture to express a fear whether the number of writers in the present day may not bear too great a proportion to readers; and whether, again, many of those writers do not become such, without adequate reflection and preparation. No event, no incident of any kind, of the least interest or importance, now occurs in any branch of literature, science, politics, or in the ordinary course even of domestic life, but ten thousand pens are instantly set in motion simultaneously for the press, whose swarthy unseen battalions are forthwith at work to submit these hasty lucubrations to the public. Yet it cannot be denied that the current of our periodical literature, running alike through daily, weekly, monthly, or quarterly channels, must appear, upon the whole; to even a captious, if a competent, censor, highly creditable to an accomplished age. I can most conscientiously express my belief, that for a long time no periodical of note has been established in this country which has not disclosed the desire of its conductors to fit it for the purpose of innocent recreation and information, to readers of both sexes, and of all ages and classes. It is a fact, however, stated with concern and reluctance, that there is a poisonous growth of libertine literature*—if the last word be not indeed libelled by such a use of it—designed for the lowest classes of society; supplied, moreover, to an extent scarcely equal to the demand for it, and which exists to an extent unfortunately little suspected. I know not how this dreadful evil is to be encountered, except by affording every possible encouragement, from every quarter, to the dissemination, in the cheapest practicable form, of wholesome and engaging literature. If poison be cheap, let its antidote be cheaper.

In this great and free country, public opinion must express itself *promptly* on current political events, which are from day to day treated with a degree of ability indicating the very masterly hands that are at work. In fact, I personally know several instances of contributions to the current political literature of the day, by persons whose high social rank, position, and pretensions—whose proved knowledge, ability, and celebrity, are little suspected by their readers, and whose names would insure almost universal attention and deference.

Rapidity and power largely characterise our POLITICAL LITERATURE; and let me also add, in a spirit of honest pride and truth, that it is very rarely defaced by personality, invasion of the sanctities of private life, or the slightest trace of immorality or licentiousness. Exceptions may possibly exist; but I defy any one to adduce instances of successful and prolonged indecorums of this description. The spirit of the age will not tolerate them; and our writers dare not, nor do they wish, to offend that just and dignified spirit.

Thus the freedom of the Press—an enormous engine in a highly civilised community, and where its action is not oppressed by the heavy hand of tyranny—is worthily used by a free, a great, and a good people, if one of the humblest may be permitted so to characterise his fellow-countrymen; and long may it so continue! And yet no nation is more subject than our own, from the very necessities of its social condition, to vivid political and polemical excitement, calling forth, or having a tendency to call forth, all the most fierce and violent passions of our nature.

Passing with this honest and unbiassed expression of opinion, from that portion of our literature which is professedly devoted to the treatment of ephemeral topics and objects, I wish to say a few words on the

* Some years ago, a notorious writer of this class, when far advanced in life, called upon me, and in the course of conversation, with tears in his eyes, deplored having prostituted his powers to corrupt the minds, and unsettle the religious opinions, of his readers; and with anguished energy added, "What would I not give at this moment to annihilate everything that bears my name, and to be able to say on my deathbed, that I had left 'no line which, dying, I could wish to blot.'"

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writers of separate and independent works—speaking again, as in the presence of youthful aspirants to literary distinction. Let them ask themselves whether they wish that which they purpose writing, *to live?* If they do, it is really properly considered a bold aspiration: it is to elevate themselves above innumerable millions of mankind who never were, nor can, nor will, be so distinguished from their fellows. Ought not, then, the pains and effort, both in duration and intensity, to be commensurate? Rely upon it that Horace is right—

Qui studet optatam cursu contingere metam,
Multa tulit, fecitque puer, sudavit, et alsit.

Provided the aspirant believe himself intellectually fit to attempt attaining so resplendent a position, let him consider—as he will, if moved by superior impulses, which are powerless to inferior minds—how to select subjects of enduring interest to mankind, and then to treat them in a high and catholic spirit, so as to attract the human heart and intellect, which, let him ever bear in mind, are one and the same in all times and places, and unaffected by fleeting topics and associations, however powerfully intense for the moment. Those who were swayed by them pass away quickly and for ever. A month, a year, a generation, a century, and all trace of them, their sayings and their doings, has perished, as completely as disappears breath from the polished surface of the mirror.

Having selected a fitting subject, let him imitate the glorious devotion of those great ones of past time, whose works still glitter vividly before *our* eyes, even as they did before charmed contemporary eyes. The writers of Greece and Rome underwent a degree of heroic self-denial and labour, which, in our day, we can hardly realise; but we behold with admiration the realised and imperishable results: their transcendent performances in poetry, philosophy, history, and oratory, such as it now requires great effort and high attainments even only moderately to understand and appreciate. Let me mention, in passing, an incident relating to Thucydides.

When only sixteen years of age, he heard Herodotus, then not more than twenty-nine years old, recite his charming History, as was the custom, in public; and wept with the intensity of his emotions. From that moment he conceived and cherished the high ambition of becoming himself an historian; and how he ultimately acquitted himself, his noble history of the Peloponnesian war is extant to tell us; and, in doing so, to exhibit a model of history for all time to come. Such was the admiration of this great performance by Demosthenes, that he transcribed it eight times! and became so familiar with it, that he could repeat almost the whole of it!

There may, for aught any of us know, be present in this great assembly, some gifted spirit resolved on silently preparing to face posterity, to secure a literary immortality; self-denying and self-reliant, fixing an eagle eye on remote and applauding ages; calmly content to make every sacrifice, even that of contemporaneous approbation and enthusiasm. Let him not, however, despair of even this latter; for there are acute and watchful eyes ever open to scan the pretensions of real greatness — persons generously eager, for the honour and reputation of the age, to bring that greatness forward and do it homage wherever it presents itself. I would say to such a one, Hail, young candidate for future and undying renown! Bethink you, that you are treading in the steps of immortal predecessors, who, could they but speak to you, might say, Remember! Persevere! But, alas! in the special circumstances of the present age, when mind is so early and universally stimulated into action, Power may be great, but inseparably linked to Poverty, which compels it to relinquish, with a swelling heart, its proud aspiration to delight and instruct future ages, in order simply to *live—to exist*, in its own day. Well, in that case, O fettered, harassed, and noble spirit! look proudly inward! Consider how the

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Deity has distinguished you by His endowments; and bow with cheerful reverence and submission to Him and to His will, which is guided by inscrutable wisdom, in this, to you, apparently hard dispensation. Your present position is perfectly known to Him who could change it in the twinkling of an eye, and may do so. In the mean time, regard Him steadfastly as the *Father of Lights, from whom descends every good and perfect gift;* and persuade your heart that the Father will not forget his son.

Before quitting this topic, suffer me to say one word most earnestly to deprecate undervaluing the inestimable advantages of a classical education. Those in the present day most keenly and bitterly appreciate this remark, who are experiencing the practical consequences of a want of classical education. What are they to do, in either public or private society, when allusions and quotations are made, which, however erroneous and absurd, *they* cannot detect or rectify—however apposite and beautiful, *they* cannot appreciate? They appear, necessarily, vulgar, inglorious mutes. And further than this, how can they really master a language which, like our own, is so largely indebted to those of Greece and Rome? The finest writers and speakers in the present and former times, have been those most richly imbued with classical literature, which had at once chastened and elevated their taste, and made it impossible for them to stumble into coarseness or vulgarity. Great natural powers, aided by much practice, may undoubtedly enable their possessor to make right eloquent use of his mother tongue; but he is never safe from disclosing the absence of early classical culture; and were his time to come over again, would strain every nerve to acquire such precious advantages. From the moment that such notions become in the ascendant, that early classical education is a superfluity, the links which bind the intellect of age after age to those of Greece and Rome are snapped asunder. From that moment refined taste will disappear; and, moreover, the best school for training the youthful intellect to early and exact habits of thought and expression, will be irrecoverably lost. ——A fox was once advised to get rid of his tail, by a friend, who gave him many convincing reasons for dispensing with so troublesome, ungraceful, and useless an appendage; but all of a sudden, the first-mentioned fox discovered that his astute and eloquent companion had, somehow or another, contrived to lose his own tail. I thought of this some years ago, when listening to a well-known orator of the day, volubly declaiming against the folly of a classical education, of which almost every word he was uttering showed himself to be totally destitute.

Another feature of the literature of the age, is the immense and incessant multiplication of ELEMENTARY works in every department of knowledge. On this, two remarks may be offered: First, the best often indicate a great advance on those of former days, and a high appreciation of the principles which ought to regulate the communication of knowledge to learners. Secondly, the common run seem sometimes to show, in the authors or compilers, teachers who have scarcely finished being learners; and not unnaturally imagine that that which so recently seemed novel and difficult to themselves, must needs be so to all other learners, and yet have missed the notice of all other teachers. Such an incessant supply, however, must, in some degree, indicate a corresponding demand; and that is of itself a cheering sign of the times. Whoever has made an honest and creditable effort to disseminate pleasing and useful information, has so far deserved well of the age in which he lives, and has contributed, however humbly, his share in its advancement. How can he tell how many persons he may have delighted and instructed, and beguiled away from ruinous intemperance and profligacy?

Some persons complacently call the present a superficial age; but I, for one, am not presumptuous enough thus to characterise, if not slander, the

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times in which we live. Such observations often proceed from a shallow flippancy, unworthy of serious attention. Those, however, who may properly be charged with pluming themselves unduly on the possession of mere elementary knowledge, perhaps too hastily acquired, it may be well to apprise of an observation of Locke, worthy to be written in letters of gold, and to be ever before the eyes of those now alluded to. "In the sciences, every one has so much as he really knows and comprehends. What he believes only, and takes upon trust, are but shreds, which, however well in the whole piece, make no considerable addition to his stock who gathers them. Such borrowed wealth, like fairy money, *though it were gold in the hand from which he received it, will be but leaves and dust when it comes to use.*"*

Knowledge of various kinds is now diffused over a vast surface; and through indolence, or inability from various causes, great multitudes are content with the glittering surface. They may be compared to tourists, crowding eagerly and gaily to the frontiers, but never even dreaming of penetrating into the interior, of Science.

I shall say nothing of the great number of SERMONS AND RELIGIOUS publications, which make their almost daily appearance, and presumably indicate, by their continuance, a proportionate demand for them. For my own part, I rejoice to see religious truth set forth in every imaginable form and variety in which it may present itself to devout and discreet minds; especially by those who are trained as our religious teachers, and evince, by what they write, a due sense of their high and holy mission, by candour, moderation, sincerity, and piety. I read, and always did read, largely in this direction—both our old writers of divinity, and those of our own day; than whom, I am sure that none will be readier than themselves to say of their great predecessors, *there were giants in those days.* And of our living divines it may be said with truth, that they address themselves with great ability and learning, especially to theological exigencies which did not exist, at least in their present form, in the times of their foregoers.

Amiable feelings, and a facility of publishing, precipitate upon us a sort of deluge of BIOGRAPHY. People's "*Lives*" are *now*, it is to be feared, written too often without the slightest regard to their pretensions to be distinguished by such posthumous notice; and I doubt whether this may not be a secret source of some little that is affected and factitious in modern individual character. I mean, whether men, women, and even children, do not sometimes act and speak with a view to their little sayings and doings being chronicled in flattering terms after their decease. In truth, there are very few people indeed, with whose lives and character any reasonable person can feel the faintest desire to be made acquainted. When a great man dies, let his life be written, but let it also be written *greatly*. If not at all, or imperfectly, the age, or the biographer, suffers, and is disgraced; for a great memory has been slighted, or degraded. Take, for instance, the resplendent character of him whom the nation, with the eyes of all other nations upon it, so lately buried with reverent affection.

I witnessed that great burial: and methinks the scene of solemnity and grandeur rises again before my eyes. I can conceive nothing more calculated than was that transcendent spectacle profoundly to affect the heart and the imagination of a philosophical beholder. There was to be seen the chivalry of the world, shedding tears round a mighty fellow-warrior's coffin, which was descending gently for ever from their eyes, amidst melting melody, into the grave where *the worm* is now *feeding sweetly*† upon all that was mortal, of Arthur Duke of

* *Essay on the Human Understanding*, book i. c. 4, § 23. "So much," says this great man, "as we ourselves consider and comprehend of truth and reason, so much we possess of real and true knowledge. *The floating of other men's opinions in our brains, makes us not one jot the more knowing, though they happen to be true.*"—*Id. ib.*

† Job, xxiv. 20.

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Wellington. While my tears fell, in common with those of all present, including royalty itself; while music pealed mournfully, dissolving the very soul, and the gorgeous coroneted coffin finally disappeared,* there arose before my mind's eye a kindred yet different scene—the vision of some pauper burial, simple and rude, occurring perhaps at that very moment: the burial of some aged forlorn being,† whose poverty-stricken spirit was at length safely housed where *the weary are at rest:* the poor dust unattended, save by those whose duty was to bury it—without a sigh, without a tear: with no sound but a reverend voice, and the gusty air; and no prolonged ceremonial. In the world of spirits, both these might already have met—the warrior-statesman and the pauper, each aware of the different disposal of the dust he had left behind! Thus are we equally unable to evade death, to conceal or disguise its true and awful character. *One event happeneth to all.*‡ The word spoken on high, and great and mean are beside each other in the same darkness, with the same event before them.

Pardon this digression, for a moment, concerning so great, and so recent an event: one to be witnessed once only—not in a lifetime only, but perhaps in many ages.

To write the life of our immortal Wellington, to produce a πτῆμα ἐς ἀεί, would worthily occupy ten, ay, or even twenty years of the life of a highly-qualified biographer; to preserve a mighty individuality, and not lose it amidst glittering multifariousness of detail. To present Wellington to posterity, as alone posterity is likely, or concerned, to look at him, a great effort must be made to disengage him from, and indeed obliterate, all traces of mere circumstance, except where essentially indicative of idiosyncrasy, however interesting to contemporaries. His biographer ought to feel that he is really at present, and for some time to come, *too near* the greatness which has gone from us; and should, therefore, strive to place himself at least half a century, or a century, in advance of the age in which he lives. But, who now has the patient self-denial, shall I also say, the leisure, to do this? Is there, indeed, any encouragement to make the effort? Or does an indolent and prurient love of *gossip* vitiate the taste of both readers and writers of biography—encouraging the latter to trifle with the memory of the dead, and the intellect of the living?

I would recommend any young aspirant to biographical distinction to read, and meditate upon, the chief existing models of that delightful and instructive class of writings—models in respect of the fitting subject, and the strength and beauty with which that subject is invested by their writers. Let him then ask himself, Is *my* subject worthy of occupying the public attention, likely to interest posterity; and, if it be, am I capable of doing justice to his character and memory? And have I the requisite means and opportunity? I cannot quit this topic without expressing a thought which has often occurred to me, that the dead of our days, could they reappear among us for a moment, have grievous cause to complain against their survivors. The instant that those dead have disappeared, almost every act of their life, even of a private and confidential nature, is formally submitted to the scrutiny of often a harsh-judging public, not acquainted with the precise circumstances under which those acts were done—those letters, for instance, written—which become thenceforth the subjects of unsparing comment and sometimes injurious speculation! I have heard an eminent person say, when conversing on this subject, "For my part, I now take care to write no letters that may not be proclaimed on the housetops—and am very cautious whom I take into

* It was affecting to see the present Duke of Wellington gently extend his hand to touch his illustrious father's descending coffin.

† At the remote village in which Lord Byron lies buried, a friend of mine recently saw, on a page of the Register, near that which contained an entry of the noble poet's burial, another thus: "*An old man: a stranger: name unknown.*"

‡ Eccles. ii. 14.

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my confidence." Is this unreasonable, or unnatural?

Perhaps, however, the most conspicuous feature of the literature of the age, is to be seen in the department of PROSE FICTION. There can be no difficulty in pointing to the great name of Sir Walter Scott as one destined, in all probability, to attract the admiring eyes of distant ages, unless, indeed, our language fail, or the taste and genius of future times altogether alter. He was a wonderful person; and has left in our imaginative literature the traces of giant footprints, such as none dare even attempt to fill. All his contemporaries and successors, down to the present time, he "doth bestride, like a Colossus." Of this great genius it may be proudly said, that he never wrote a line which had the slightest tendency to licentiousness: and, moreover, that there is not a trace of vulgarity in any of his often dazzling and enthralling, but not equal compositions, all of which emanated from the pen of the highly-finished scholar and gentleman. This class of writing, for certain reasons of my own, unimportant to any one else, I feel extreme delicacy and difficulty in touching, or even glancing at. To criticise contemporaries, and by way of either censure or praise, is an impertinence of which, for those reasons, I cannot be guilty; but I may be allowed to express my opinion, that during the last quarter of a century, undoubted, and high, and very peculiar genius has been displayed in this fascinating department of literature. It may, at the same time, be admissible to express, most respectfully, a suspicion whether, in the opinion of future competent judges, it would be held that sufficient pains have been taken, in the present day, to construct a Fiction on a durable basis; and whether there are, consequently, many that have sufficient vitality to bloom in the atmosphere—shall I say it?—of the next succeeding century. It has always appeared to me, that to construct a durable Fiction is really a more difficult task, and requires much more original power, and far greater knowledge and taste, time, and consideration, than seems to be sometimes supposed. Let any one carefully consider the conception, plan, and execution, of those three imperishable masterpieces, *Don Quixote*, *Gil Blas*, and *Tom Jones*; and I shall be much mistaken if he will not concur in the observation which I have ventured to make.

The continuous and even increasing demand for this class of writings, both in our own country, on the Continent, and in America, is truly astonishing. I doubt whether anything of the kind is written, however humble its pretensions, which is not read by hundreds; while those of a higher, and the highest order, and the productions of persons of established reputation, are eagerly read by many hundreds of thousands of persons, perhaps ultimately by even millions, in almost every class of society. If this be so, how great is the responsibility cast upon those possessing the power of writing such works! What incalculable evil, what incalculable good, may they not do!

And I do believe that many of the most distinguished and successful labourers in this gay crowded quarter of the literary vineyard, sincerely strive to make their writings the vehicles of high moral teaching.

It is, in fact, a class of writing which must always have charms for mankind: and it may be remarked, with humble reverence, that the sublime teachings of Him who *spake as never man spake*, were largely conveyed in *parables*.

The writing of HISTORY finds great favour, and enjoys unprecedented facilities, in the present age. Generally speaking, it is in the hands of very able, learned, and faithful men; and I doubt whether history ever spoke so fully and so truthfully as in the present age. To some extent this is easily to be accounted for, even independently of the personal character of our historians; and principally by the fact that so many persons now have ample opportunities for quickly detecting erroneous statements. Authentic political information of every kind is

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accessible to almost everybody; and a consciousness of this fact naturally quickens the vigilance of historical writers, especially those dealing with modern and recent times. The historians of three or four centuries hence will have immense advantages over their predecessors of the present and previous ages. There is one history of the present day, which will present in all future time a great storehouse of authentic facts, constituting the record of one of the most critical periods in the history of civilised mankind.

POETRY is not *dead*, in the present busy practical age; but her voice is heard only faintly and fitfully, like the sounds of an Æolian harp in a crowded thoroughfare. The hurrying passengers do not hear it, nor would care about it if they did; but now and then the sounds from that harp fall deliciously on a sensitive ear, and awake fine sympathies. The poetry of the present age is principally and elegantly conversant with *sentiment*, of which it is often a very delicate and beautiful utterance. It is questionable, however, whether flights of imagination are as bold; whether it be, or at all events show itself, as strong and original as in times gone by. Yet there are grand regions which I have often greatly wondered to see *apparently* continuing untried. Oh, transcendent and most glorious faculty, there are yet boundless scenes into which thou mayest soar as on angel wing!

There is a fine spirit of CRITICISM abroad; subtle, piercing, and discriminating. Specimens of this species of literature may be seen in our weekly and even daily journals, as well as in those appearing at longer intervals—compositions which may take their place beside any extant in the language; and he who expresses this opinion, has himself been occasionally the subject of rather rough criticism, which, nevertheless, cannot bias an honest judgment. On the other hand, there is a great deal of this class of writing that is hasty and flimsy, and amounting, in fact, to a mere caricature of criticism.

Our PHILOSOPHICAL literature is of a very high order—speaking at present as far as regards style of composition; and I believe that the most distinguished foreigners, acquainted with our language, express the same opinion. Mr Dugald Stewart, a very competent judge, and one who himself wrote English with purity and force, has declared that "as an instrument of thought, and a medium of scientific communication, the English language appears to me, in its present state, to be far superior to the French." This was said nearly fifty years ago. Since then, no one can have been familiar with philosophical compositions, especially those of the present day, without having occasion to admire the simplicity, vigour, and precision with which English is written by those communicating the profoundest researches in science. If I may be allowed to express an opinion, I should select the style of Sir John Herschel as affording a model of elegance, exactness, and strength. Some of his delineations of difficult and abstruse matters are exquisitely delicate and felicitous.

Having thus glanced at the more prominent features of the literature of the age, it may be excusable to suggest the question, whether, upon the whole, the present age is, in this respect, inferior, equal, or superior to any that has preceded it? This is a question, indeed, equally applicable to all the other branches of a subject directly or indirectly involving the intellectual development of the age; but it may nevertheless not be out of place here for an over-confident observer to cast his eye on the long roll of splendid names in every department of science and literature, prose and poetical, of days preceding our own, and in other countries as well as our own, and then modestly to ask, dare we say that we have any to set beside them? Or is the present age to be regarded as under peculiar conditions, unfavourable to the development of individual eminence and greatness? Voltaire, an author whose name one can never mention but with mingled feelings of contempt, anger, and admiration, once made this remark: "Ori-

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ginal genius occurs but seldom in a nation where the literary taste is formed. The number of cultivated minds which there abound, like the trees in a thick and flourishing forest, prevent any single individual from raising his head far above the rest." But is this so? And why should it be so? Would a Plato, an Aristotle, a Newton, a Bacon, a Locke, a Leibnitz,* a Shakespeare or a Milton, a Scaliger or a Bentley, a Cervantes or a Le Sage, a Barrow or a Butler, a Chatham, a Pitt, a Fox or Burke, fail to tower above the men of the nineteenth century? The question may give rise to interesting speculations; but I shall pass them by with the observation, that one may, without presumption, venture to question the soundness of this confident *dictum* of Voltaire, who doubtless secretly hoped that he himself would be regarded as a transcendent exception to the rule which, possibly for that purpose alone, he modestly laid down.

Thus much for what may be termed *the vehicle or circulating medium* of thought; in discussing which, it was almost necessary to touch, however slightly, several of the multifarious subjects with which it is connected. May I recur to the question, Are we of the present day pigmies or giants, as compared with those who have gone before us?—or whether, taking a large average, we may be considered as below, or on a level with them? Let us reserve the matter for a future stage of our speculations; and in the mean time try to avoid a tendency to become, as Horace has expressed it, *praisers of the past* on the one hand, and, on the other, confident and vainglorious as to the position of intellect in the present age. It may be that *there were giants in those days*—intellectual giants in the times before us; it may be that so there have always been, and that there are now. But here may be started an important and interesting question: Is the human intellect now really different from, or greater than, that which it ever was, since we have authentically known of its existence and action? The stature of mankind is just what it was three thousand years ago, as is proved by the examination of mummies: why should it be different with their minds? The intellect of Newton, La Place, or La Grange, may stand, says Sir John Herschel,† in fair competition with that of Archimedes, Aristotle, or Plato. But is it not also possible, and the question is a very great one, that the Almighty may have prescribed limits to the human intellect, which it never could, and never can pass, however it may have the advantage of dealing with the accumulated riches and experience of all the past intellectual action of our species, as far as its results exist, for our contemplation and guidance? Or may there exist dormant energies of the intellect, beyond all past, but not incapable of future and prodigious, development?

The INTELLECT! But what is intellect?—and in merely asking the question, we seem suddenly sinking into a sort of abyss! Is intellect an unknown power, like Gravitation, whose existence is evidenced only by its action, while of the nature of that power we are utterly in the dark? Seven years ago I ventured, in a work incidentally dealing with such topics, to ask the following question: "Metaphysics, or mental philosophy: what shall be said upon this subject? What do we now really *know* of that strange mysterious thing, *the Human Mind*, after thousands of years' ingenious and profound speculations of philosophers? Has the Almighty willed that it should be so?—that the nature and operations of the MIND of man, shall for ever be shrouded in mystery impenetrable, and that we shall continue at once pleasing, puzzling, and harassing ourselves, and exercising our highest faculties to the end of time, with contradictory speculations and hypotheses?" In this present month of December, I submitted this passage, for the purposes of this even-

* It was the fond object of this great philosophical genius to subvert the Newtonian system!

† *Disc. on Nat. Phil.*, p. 40.

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ing, to two eminent academical teachers in England and in Scotland, disciples of different schools, of that which passes under the name of metaphysics.* One wrote to me thus:—"I can subscribe to the perplexity expressed about metaphysics, in the separate paragraph of your letter." The other told me, that he thought I had indicated the true state of metaphysical science in the present day. Then, I asked him whether he considered that we were *really* any further advanced—or whether, at least, it was generally agreed that we were further advanced, in admitted knowledge of the nature and functions of the mind, than Aristotle was—that is, upwards of twenty-two centuries ago? He considered for a moment, and replied in the negative!—adding, "We may think that we are, but that is not my opinion." I then asked the same question of my other friend, and he wrote as follows:—"I am afraid that very few substantial advances have been made in psychology, since the days of Aristotle. Perhaps more people know something of the human mind than knew anything about it in his time; but I doubt whether any man of the present day knows more about it than he knew!"

What opinion would Plato and Aristotle form, of the existing state of metaphysical science in this country and Germany, if they could rise from their long sleep to scrutinise it? On how many great points would they find their philosophical successors of—let us say—the last two centuries, *agreed?* And on which of them would either Plato or Aristotle be forced to acknowledge that their own speculations had been subverted by demonstrative strength? What new facts and phenomena would be presented to them in mental science? Who shall be our spokesman, of dead or living metaphysicians, from Descartes, Locke, Malebranche, and Leibnitz, down to Kant, Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel? What a ghostly wrangling might we expect to hear! What would be the result? Would the elder disputants claim the later as disciples; or these prove that their predecessors had been altogether and absurdly in the wrong?

But, you will reasonably ask, is it, then, really so? A few minutes' conversation with the first professed or acknowledged metaphysician whom you meet, however he may at first dispute it, will prove the existence of the fact, that the very elements of the science at this moment are floating about in extreme uncertainty. Ask him—what he means by *mind?*—is it material or immaterial? What does he understand by matter?—does it exist, or not? Is thought the functional result of physical organisation, or the action of a separate spiritual existence? If so, how is it united with, or what are its relations to, matter? How does it stand with relation to the external world? Nay—is there any external world at all?† What is the nature of the mind's internal action? What is consciousness? What is perception, and what are its *media?* What are ideas?—are they, or are they not, innate?‡—for this grand question

* This word is a barbarous compound by the Schoolmen of the words [τὰ] μετὰ τὰ φυσικά, which were used by the editors of the extant works of Aristotle, to designate his abstract reasonings and speculations concerning the original causes of existence, without relation to matter, and which, they were of opinion, should be studied "after his Physics," μετὰ τὰ φυσικά, or treatises on Natural Philosophy.

† Bishop Berkeley, an exquisite metaphysical genius, brought profound reasonings in support of his opinion, that our belief in the reality of an external world is totally unfounded!

‡ "*Innate* ideas" signify those notions, or impressions, supposed to have been stamped upon the mind from the first instant of its existence, as contradistinguished to those which it afterwards gradually acquires from without. Locke undertook to demonstrate that ideas are not innate: and the dispute has the greatest names arrayed on each side. There is one remark on the subject, made by Bishop Law, the patron of Dr Paley, and a zealous partisan of Locke, which has always appeared to me worthy of attention: "It will really come to the same thing with regard to the moral attributes of God, and the nature of virtue and vice, whether the Deity has *implanted* these instincts and affections in us, or has framed and disposed us in such a manner—has given us such power, and placed us in such circumstances—that we must *necessarily acquire* them."—LAW'S *Translation of Archbishop King on the Origin of Evil.*—P. 79 (note).

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is, and even in our own country, still the subject of dispute! What constitutes personal identity? And so forth: everything proving the more unsettled the further you push your way into the darkness and confusion worse confounded than that out of which you had gone. The distinguished metaphysician to whom I last alluded, a subtle, original, and learned thinker, wrote to me thus, the other day: "The science of the human mind, as hitherto cultivated, is a poor, unedifying pursuit: we seek to isolate the mind from the things with which it is occupied—the external world, and to study that mind in its isolation. But that is impracticable. We instantly lose our footing. We get among abstractions, darkness, and nonentity. How do you know, begins to ask the puzzled inquirer, that we have *a mind* at all? Why cannot *a body* be so constituted. as to think, and feel, and love, and hate? He is perhaps answered, that the opinion in favour of a MIND (you know that I am a zealous anti-materialist) is at any rate more probable. The science of the human mind, then, according to this, is the science of something which only *probably* exists! A fine science that must be, which deals with something which *perhaps* does not exist!"

Here is a picture of existing metaphysical science! It is, in truth, only a reflection of some of the myriad dark shadows of all past speculation; and shall it be said that it bears a similar relation to the future? Metaphysics are called a science; and yet its main questions are—"*What are* the questions!" It deals with being, and its conditions, and yet cannot say what *being* is: and, indeed, I doubt whether it can be truly given credit for possessing one single grand truth, universally recognised as such. In short, metaphysics are to each particular mind what it chooses to make them; though undoubtedly these exercitations have a tendency to sharpen its faculties. A whole life of an ingenious rational being may be occupied in these pursuits—however irritating it may be to fond metaphysicians to be told so—without the acknowledged acquisition of a single *fact*, of one solitary, practical, substantial result. He has been doing, all the while, little else than amusing himself with a sort of mental kaleidoscope, or gazing at a series of dissolving views. He has been floundering on from beginnings in which nothing is begun, to conclusions in which nothing is concluded!

It would seem, however, that new forces are now being brought into the field, and magnetism and electricity, whether one and the same force, or different, are destined to dissolve our difficulties. According to one *quasi* philosopher, man's body is a *magnet*,* mysteriously communicating with other bodies, and external objects, without any *visible* medium; and this discovery is destined, say the professors of the new science, to cast a new light on the nature of being, of life, death, sleep, spirit, matter—*and theology!* Apparently one of our own countrymen has anonymously announced the exhilarating discovery, that man is a mere electro-chemical machine, in common with all the lower animals, of what sort or size whatsoever! "The mental action," quoth this sage, "is identical, except in

* "Mesmer," says Tennemann, in his *Manual of the History of Philosophy*, "discovered, or rather re-discovered, the existence of a new force—a universally diffused power, similar to attraction and electricity, permeating and acting on all organised and unorganised bodies." Some view it simply as "a nervous fluid;" while others resolve certain recent alleged phenomena of natural and artificial somnambulism, to "the power of the mind acting directly on the organisation:" whence we have lately heard of "two new sciences—Neuro-Hypnology, and Electro-Biology." Professor Eschenmayer admits the existence of "an organic ether," spread everywhere, and subtler than light; and with this view "connects his mystical and spiritual metaphysics." Dr Passavant "shows the intimate and important relation between the science and the sublimest sentiments of *religion!*" and Dr Ennemoser can trace "the connection and distinction of the highest degree of Mesmerism, and—*Miracles!*" What will be said of these things, a few centuries hence? Shall we be laughed at for laughing at them—if our age *do* laugh at them? Or does a discriminating philosophy detect in action, amidst a mass of absurdity, and even fraud, startling indications of physical truth?

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degree: it may be imponderable and intangible—the result of the action of an apparatus of an electric nature"—I am quoting his words—"a modification of that surprising agent which takes magnetism, heat, and light, as other subordinate forms: electricity being almost as metaphysical as ever mind was supposed to be.... Mental action passes at once into the category of natural things; its old metaphysical character vanishes in a moment, *and the distinction between physical and moral is annulled.*" * There is a stride indeed!—the stride, to be sure, of an impudent child. According to him, my friends, we in this hall may behold in ourselves a choice assortment of electrical machines—quaintly conceiving themselves *responsible beings!*—I, giving out the sparks, chemically or mechanically—I do not exactly know or care which—and you looking on and listening to their crackling sound, with electrical sympathy and complacency! What will be the next stage of this wondrous development? It is hard to treat these things gravely; yet they have been, and are, widely *and sedulously* disseminated in the present day, in this country—in this, the nineteenth century! With what object? And what measure must have been taken, by those who do so, of the intellect of the age?

How refreshing is it to recollect, amidst all these results of never-ending, and often impious trifling with the grandest subjects with which man can concern himself, the sublime and authoritative declaration of Holy Scripture, *There is a* SPIRIT *in man; and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding!* †

What, therefore, shall we conclude? That MIND remains, at present, whatever revelations may be in store for future times, the great insoluble mystery it ever was, so far as relates to its constitution and mode of action? That we have no evidence of its faculties being greater, or less, now, than they ever were; and that, judging merely from the past, we have no grounds for expecting alteration for the future? It may be, that such knowledge is too high for us, and that for wise purposes we *cannot* attain to it, and that the absence of it does not affect the object with which man was placed upon the earth.—I am myself strongly disposed to think that every person who has meditated upon the operations of his own mind, has occasionally, and suddenly, been startled with a notion that his mind possesses qualities and attributes of which he has *nowhere* seen any account. I do not know how to express it, but I have several times had a transient consciousness of mere ordinary incidents then occurring, having somehow or other happened before, accompanied by a vanishing idea of being able even to predict the sequence. I once mentioned this to a man of powerful intellect, and he said, "So have I." Again—it may be that there is more of truth than one suspects, in the assertion which I met with in a work of Mr de Quincey's, that *forgetting*—absolute forgetting—is a thing not possible to the human mind. Some evidence of this may be derived from the fact of long-missed incidents and states of feeling suddenly being reproduced, and without any perceptible train of association. Were this to be so, the idea is very awful; and it has been suggested by a great thinker, that merely perfect memory of everything, may constitute the *great book* which shall be opened in the last day, on which man has been distinctly told that the secrets of all hearts shall be made known; for *all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.* ‡

Man's mind, I must take the liberty of repeating, is indeed a mystery to

* "If mental action *be electric*," says the anonymous and very quaint writer alluded to—the author of *The Vestiges of the Natural History of Creation*, "the proverbial quickness of thought—that is, the quickness of the transmission of sensation and will—may be presumed to have been brought to an exact admeasurement! . . . Mental action may accordingly be presumed to have a rapidity equal to 192,000 miles in the second!—*i.e.*, the quickness with which the electric agent, light, travels!"

† Job, xxxii. 8.

‡ Heb. iv. 13.

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him. In the mean time, let restless metaphysical speculators go on, if they please, amusing and puzzling each other with theories and hypotheses to the end of time; only, my friends, let not ourselves be drawn within their meshes, but consider whether life, thought, *and the sense of responsibility*, have not been given to us for infinitely wiser and greater purposes, however awfully mysterious, than to exhaust our faculties in endless and nugatory inquiries. Investigations of this kind, nevertheless, are not in all points of view to be deprecated, but may possibly be attended with morally beneficial results. "It is of great use to the sailor," says Locke, "to know the length of his line, though he cannot, with it, fathom all the depths of the ocean. It is well he knows that it is long enough to reach the bottom, at such places as are necessary to direct his voyage, and caution him against running upon shoals, that may ruin him. Our business here is to know, not all things, but those which concern our conduct. If we can find out those measures whereby a rational creature, put in that state in which man is in this world, may, and ought, to govern his opinions and actions depending thereon, we need not be troubled that some other things escape our knowledge."* And, finally, be it observed, that we have no authority from revealed religion, for repressing what are called metaphysical speculations, however little direct encouragement it may afford them;—and, even if their result be only to prove their futility, that, of itself, constitutes a signal fact.

It will be observed that I have been hitherto dealing with the so-called science of the mind, simply as the subject of human speculation. How REVELATION deals with man, physically, mentally, and morally, remains to be seen. Contenting ourselves for the present, with the undoubted *existence* of intellect, and its action, somehow or other; and postponing the consideration of the cognate subject of ethics, or moral science, it may not possibly be deemed presumptuous if one venture to express an opinion, that the intellect of the present age appears, *cæteris paribus*, in as high a state of general development as has been known on the earth; and that it may even be doubted whether there be not now among us—I speak of ourselves and other civilised nations—men of an intellectual strength approaching that of the most illustrious of our recorded species. But in saying this, I rely only on the evidence afforded by the recent progress and the present state of *physical* science. If we have made, as I feel compelled to think is the case, no real advance in psychological science for ages, how vast has been that of physical science, within the last half, or even quarter of a century!

Go back for a moment, in imagination, to the times when this earth was thought the fixed centre of the universe and an extended plane,† the heavenly bodies mere glittering specks revolving round it!—when Thales, a great philosopher, one of the seven wise men of Greece, conceived amber to have an *inherent soul* or essence, which, awakened by friction, *went forth*

* *Essay on the Human Understanding*, book i. ch. i. § 6. A little further on, this profound thinker thus admirably proceeds:—"Men extending their inquiries beyond their capacities, and letting their thoughts wander into those depths where they can find no sure footing, it is no wonder that they raise questions, and multiply disputes; which never coming to any clear resolution, are proper only to continue and increase their doubts, and *to confirm them at last in perfect scepticism*. Whereas, were the capacities of our understandings well considered, the extent of our knowledge once discovered, and the horizon found which sets the bounds between the enlightened and dark parts of things—between what is, and what is not, comprehensible by us—men would perhaps, with less scruple, acquiesce in the avowed ignorance of the one, and employ their thoughts and discourse with more advantage and satisfaction in the other."

† This notion is not yet apparently banished from among ourselves even. "I remember," says the present Astronomer-Royal, "a man in my youth—my friend was in his inquiries an ingenious man, a sort of philosopher—who used to say he should like to *go to the edge of the earth and look over*."—AIRY'S *Lectures on Astronomy*, p. 46, 2d edit., 1848.

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and brought back the light particles floating around (such were his ideas of its electrical qualities!)—when the great Aristotle taught that the heavenly bodies were bound fast in spheres which revolved with them round our earth — the bodies themselves being motionless—the first sphere being that in which the fixed stars are placed; then the five planets; the sun; and, next to the earth, the moon: the earth itself being at rest, and the centre of the universe! But time would fail me to recapitulate these marks of what we call primitive simplicity; and your memories will quickly suggest them, far lower down than to the times of astrology and alchemy. How stand we now? Little though we know, by our own research and reasonings, concerning our own inner man, what have we not come to know of the world in which we live, and our physical relations to it; of the wonderful structures of ourselves, animals, and vegetables; of the glorious heavens around and about us? Man is indeed a wonder to himself, and lives amidst an incomprehensible and ever-increasing wonder. Let us merely glance, for a moment, at one or two of the leading features of modern physiology, of chemistry, mechanics, astronomy, and geology.

The whole earth has been converted into man's observatory; in every part of which he is incessantly, simultaneously, and systematically at work, and communicating, and comparing, each with the other, their results. What would Aristotle say, Lord Bacon standing by with gladdened heart, were he to be told of the astronomical, geological, magnetic, and physiological observations, researches, and experiments at this moment going on in every quarter of the globe to which adventurous man can penetrate; observations and experiments conducted by those who act strictly in concert, and in rigorous adherence to universally recognised rules and principles of inquiry and experiment? That the greatest intellects of the age are ever at work, patiently methodising, combining, and comparing, the results thus obtained, and deducing from them inferences of the last importance? What relation do ages of our past history bear to a single year *thus* spent?

We have thoroughly dissected, for instance, the human and almost all known animal structures — those of the present tenants of every element; correcting innumerable errors, and developing extensive and important relations and analogies. The result is, to overwhelm, and almost crush our small faculties with the evidences of transcendent wisdom and beneficence. The subdued soul can only murmur, *Marvellous are Thy works, and that my soul knoweth right well!*

A word about anatomy, human and comparative, with reference to some recently promulgated conclusions of deep significance and interest.

The human structure seems to have been nearly exhausted anatomically, even as far as relates to the nerves, except, perhaps, as to microscopical researches, now being actively prosecuted, and with very important results. This remark, however, applies only to the *facts* of human anatomy: on the significance or meaning of those facts, quite a new light seems dawning. Man now, by his own researches, finds that he is indeed, as God had ages before told him, *fearfully and wonderfully made;* and the enlightened and pious philosophy of the present day recognises as a fact, on the authority of revelation, which has recorded it in language of ineffable awe and sublimity, that the human species came upon this planet solely in virtue of a direct act of creation by the Almighty. *God created man in His own image—in the image of God created he him. And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.* "He did not merely possess it," observes Mr Coleridge; "he *became* it. It was his proper being; his truest self; the man in the man. All organised beings have life, in common, each after its kind. This, therefore, all animals possess, and man as an animal. But in addition to this, God transfused into man a higher gift,

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and specially imbreathed even a living —that is, self-subsisting—soul; a soul having its life in itself." *

Philosophy reverently owns that it knows of no other clue to *beginnings*, than that thus vouchsafed exclusively and positively by revelation. In examining the human structure, however, and comparing it with that of animals in general, a new and grand evidence has lately been afforded of the unity of the divine action; supplying the last argument required, and left untouched by the famous Cudworth, to refute the old atheistic doctrine of Democritus and his followers—who, it will be remembered, resolved the existence of men and animals into the fortuitous concourse of atoms—by demonstrating the existence, in the Divine Mind, of a pattern, or plan, prior to its manifestation in the creation of man. "The evidence," says the great physiologist, to whom we are indebted† for this noble contribution to science and natural theology—I mean Professor Owen, who I believe has carried comparative anatomy much beyond the point at which it had been left by his illustrious predecessor Cuvier—"the evidence of unity of plan in the structure of animals, testifies to the oneness of their Creator, as the modifications of the plan for different modes of life, illustrate the beneficence of the designer." Human anatomy has thus acquired a new interest and significance. Man is no longer regarded as though he were distinct in his anatomy from all the rest of the animal creation; but his structure is perceived to be an exquisite modification of many other structures, the whole of which have now been recognised as modifications of one and the same general pattern. Every one of the two hundred and sixty bones which may be enumerated in the human skeleton, can be unerringly traced in the skeletons of many hundred inferior animals; and the human anatomist of our day begins to comprehend the nature of his own structure, in a way never dreamed of by his predecessors. Thus, as it appears to me, is supplied a splendid addition to the treasures of natural theology.

"Of the unity of the Deity," says Paley,‡ "the proof is the *uniformity of plan* observable in the system." And let me interpose the remark, that every day is accumulating upon us proofs of this sublime doctrine.

"We never get amongst such original, or totally different modes of existence, as to indicate that we are come into the province of a different creator, or under the direction of a different will. . . . The inspection and comparison of *living* forms add to the argument without number." And that, in some respects, incomparable writer proceeds to instance a series of similitudes between all animals, which "surely bespeak the same creation and the same creator." Thus wrote Paley just half a century ago—in 1802: had he been now living, how he would have hailed this discovery of Owen, in this our own day! I am aware that, when it was first announced, suspicions were for a moment entertained, in one or two quarters, that it tended to afford a colour to what had been called the "*Theory of Development*"§—of which I have reason to know that there is no more determined opponent than Professor Owen himself—that is, that during an endless succession of ages, one class of animals was "developed" from another. I have thought much, as far

* *Aids to Reflection.* Introduction, Aphorisms, ix.

† See *The Archetype and Homologies of the Vertebrate Skeleton*, and *On the Nature of Limbs.* By RICHARD OWEN, F.R.S. 8vo.

‡ *Natural Theology*, chap. xxv.—"Of the Unity of the Deity."

§ In Mr Hugh Miller's *Old Red Sandstone*, a charming little record of his own interesting and valuable contributions to geological science, will be found some just and contemptuous observations on the *Theory of Development*, chap. iii. In speaking of Lamarck, the whimsical author, if so he may be regarded, of this same theory, Mr Miller drolly observes—"Lamarck himself, when bringing home in triumph the skeleton of some huge salamander or crocodile of the *lias*, might indulge consistently with his theory in the pleasing belief that he had possessed himself of the bones of his grandfather—a grandfather removed, of course, to a remote degree of consanguinity, by the intervention of a few hundred thousand '*great-greats.*'"

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as I am able, about this matter, and own that I see not the slightest grounds for connecting a real and great discovery with a preposterous theory—such as I believe no living philosopher of the slightest note would venture to stamp with the sanction of his authority; and even he or they, if there be more than one concerned, who have vamped up "The Vestiges of Creation," have never ventured to affix their names to the performance. There is not, indeed, a tittle of evidence to support the derogatory notion that man is the result of a change gradually brought about in any inferior animal. It is simply a gratuitous absurdity—a repetition of one long exploded—that animals, when placed in new circumstances, *alter*, and are then capable of propagating such alteration; that if new circumstances be only given time enough to operate, the changes may be such as to constitute a new series! This old nonsense has been recently revived and spuriously decked out with the spoils of modern science, so as to arrest the attention of the simple for a moment; only, however, to be quickly repudiated by even them, and then again forgotten, but doubtless to be again reproduced out of the

> "Limbo large and broad, since called,
> The Paradise of Fools,"*

when the exposure of its absurdity has been forgotten — reproduced as one of the persevering but abortive efforts of infidelity, to subvert the foundations of morality, social order, a future state, and the belief of a personal superintending Deity governing his creatures with reference to it.

I cannot quit this branch of the subject without bringing before you a recent, and a most interesting and splendid illustration of the pitch to which comparative anatomy has reached in this country—one which renders its conclusions absolutely inevitable. The incident which I am about to mention exhibits the result of an immense induction of particulars in this noble science, and bears no faint analogy to the magnificent astronomical calculation, or prediction, whichever one may call it, presently to be laid before you.

Let it be premised that Cuvier, the late illustrious French physiologist and comparative anatomist, had said, that in order to deduce from a single fragment of its structure, the entire animal, it was necessary to have a *tooth*, or an entire articulated *extremity*. In his time, the comparison was limited to the external configuration of bone. The study of the *internal* structure had not proceeded so far.

In the year 1839, Professor Owen was sitting alone in his study, when a shabbily-dressed man made his appearance, announcing that he had got a great curiosity which he had brought from New Zealand, and wished to dispose of it to him. Any one in London can now see the article in question, for it is deposited in the Museum of the College of Surgeons in Lincoln's Inn Fields. It has the appearance of an old marrow-bone, about six inches in length, and rather more than two inches in thickness, *with both extremities broken off;* and Professor Owen considered, that to whatever animal it might have belonged, the fragment must have lain in the earth for centuries. At first he considered this same marrow-bone to have belonged to an ox—at all events to a quadruped; for the wall or rim of the bone was six times as thick as the bone of any bird, even the ostrich. He compared it with the bones in the skeleton of an ox, a horse, a camel, a tapir—and every quadruped apparently possessing a bone of that size and configuration; but it corresponded with none. On this he very narrowly examined the surface of the bony rim, and at length became satisfied that this monstrous fragment must have belonged to *a bird!*—to one at least *as* large as an ostrich, but of a totally different species; and consequently one never before heard of, as an ostrich was by far the biggest bird known. From the difference in the *strength* of the bone, the ostrich being unable to fly, so must have been unable this unknown bird: and so our anatomist came to

* *Paradise Lost*, book iii.

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the conclusion that this old shapeless bone indicated the former existence, in New Zealand, of some huge bird, at least as great as an ostrich, but of a far heavier and more sluggish kind. Professor Owen was confident* of the validity of his conclusions, but could communicate that confidence to no one else; and notwithstanding attempts to dissuade him from committing his views to the public, he printed his deductions in the Transactions of the Zoological Society for the year 1839, where fortunately they remain on record as conclusive evidence of the fact of his having then made this guess, so to speak, in the dark. He caused the bone, however, to be engraved; and having sent a hundred copies of the engraving to New Zealand, in the hopes of their being distributed and leading to interesting results, he patiently waited for three years—viz., till the year 1842—when he received intelligence from Dr Buckland, at Oxford, that a great box, just arrived from New Zealand, consigned to himself, was on its way, unopened, to Professor Owen; who found it filled with bones, palpably of a bird, one of which was three feet in length, and much more than double the size of any bone in the ostrich! And out of the contents of this box the Professor was positively enabled to articulate almost the entire skeleton of a huge wingless bird, between TEN AND ELEVEN FEET in height, its bony structure in strict conformity with the fragment in question; and that skeleton may be at any time seen at the Museum of the College of Surgeons, towering over, and nearly twice the height of the skeleton of an ostrich; and at its feet is lying the old bone from which alone consummate anatomical science had deduced such an astounding reality—the existence of an enormous extinct creature of the bird kind, in an island where previously no bird had been known to exist larger than a pheasant or a common fowl!

* The paper on which he even sketched the outline of the unknown bird, is now in the hands of an accomplished naturalist in London—Mr Broderip.

In the vast and deeply interesting department of human knowledge, however, of which I am speaking, the eager inquirer is sternly stopped, as by a voice saying, "Hitherto shalt *thou* come, and no further;" and he is fain to obey. As the metaphysician is unable to tell us what constitutes the mind, so it is with the physiologist, with reference to LIFE. His most rigorous analyses have totally failed to detect what is the precise nature of that mysterious force, if one may use the word, which we designate by the word "Life!" He sees its infinitely varied modes of existence and action; but *what it is* that so exists and acts, is now as completely hidden from the highly-trained eye of the modern physiologist, as it was from the keen and eager eye of Aristotle. We cannot even conjecture its nature; except, perhaps, by vaguely suggesting electricity, magnetism, galvanism, or some such modification of ethereal force; while the high philosophy of this age regards all these as being only agents used as subtler *media* for manifesting the phenomena of life than flesh and bone, but not a whit more *life* than they. Language has been exhausted in attempting to express the various notions of it which have occurred to the profoundest of mankind. Thus Newton knew nothing of what constituted gravitation, but could tell only the laws which regulated its action. Nor, to recur for a moment to a topic already touched, do we know, nor are we able to conjecture, how the soul of man exists in conjunction with his body. That it has, however, a separate, independent, immaterial existence, being as distinct from the body as is the house from its inhabitant, and is not the mere result of physical functions or forces, but endued with the precious and glorious gift of immortality, I suppose no one doubts, who wishes to be considered a believer in the Christian religion, or to rank as a Christian philosopher. The doctrine of materialism is not now that of the philosophical world; and I think that the number of votaries of that doctrine, never great, is fast

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declining. The philosophy of the present age does not pretend to see anything impossible, or unreasonable, in the soul's absolute independence of the body, with which it is so incomprehensibly united, and from which it so mysteriously takes its departure.—I again repeat, that at present I am dealing with the matter as one of only *human* speculation. And as man has hitherto been baffled in all his attempts to discover the nature of life, so has it been with him in respect of death. The awful question of the Almighty himself to Job remains unanswered—*Have the gates of death been opened unto thee? or hast thou seen the doors of the shadow of death?*

Is it, however, permissible to imagine some future NEWTON of physiology or chemistry, or both united, consciously on the verge of solving the tremendous problem, what constitutes LIFE?—agitated as Newton was when approaching the discovery of gravitation, but persevering, till at length the awful mystery lies exposed to his trembling eye!—The vitality of all human, animal, and vegetable existence, in all its modes and conditions, as absolutely demonstrable as any physical fact at present cognisable by the sense and understanding of man! One's mind falters at the contemplation. And what might be the effect, on the being of mankind, of so stupendous a discovery? With what powers would they become thenceforth invested? And is the other great question—the mind, its real nature and relations to the body—also to be in like manner settled?—and man's relations to the dread future in some measure perceptible even while in this life? It is easy to ask; but what mortal shall answer? even centuries upon centuries hence, if so long last the state of things with which man is concerned! Let us, then, humbly return to the point from which we started.

And we may hear the profound comparative anatomist of this our enlightened day, in surveying constantly accumulating proofs—each indicating, in every direction, the endlessness of omnipotent resources, and of the wisdom and goodness of the ever-blessed Creator—exclaim, in the sublime language of Scripture, placed on record more than four thousand years ago: *Ask now the* BEASTS, *and they shall teach thee; and the* FOWLS *of the air, and they shall tell thee. Or speak to the* EARTH, *and it shall teach thee; and the* FISHES *of the sea shall declare unto thee: Who knoweth not in all these, that the hand of the Lord hath wrought this, in whose hand is the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind.**

The generation and use of *mechanical* power will ever distinguish the age in which we live, not only when tested by its astonishing practical and daily-developing results, but when referred to the mental energy which has led the way to them. "Almost all the great combinations of modern mechanism," says Sir John Herschel, "and many of its refinements and nicer improvements, are creations of *pure intellect*, grounding its exertions upon a moderate number of very elementary propositions in theoretical mechanics and geometry." "On this head," he justly adds, "not volumes merely, but libraries, are requisite to enumerate and describe the prodigies of ingenuity which have been lavished on everything connected with machinery and engineering."† Which of us that saw that true wonder of our time, that visible and profoundly suggestive epitome and sum of man's doings since he was placed on this planet, the Great Exhibition of 1851—a spectacle, however, apparently passing out of the public mind without having had its true significance adequately appreciated—would not recognise as one, but still only one, and a minor, yet resplendent feature, its rich array of evidences of the truth of these remarks? There, mechanical power was seen in every known form of manifestation and application, as it is in action at this moment, "diffusing over the whole earth," to quote again this distinguished philosopher, "the productions of any part of it; to

* Job, xii. 7-10.

† *Discourse on the Study of Natural Philosophy*, pp. 63, 64.

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fill every corner of it with miracles of art and labour, in exchange for its peculiar commodities; and to concentrate around us, in our dwellings, apparel, and utensils, the skill of all who in the present and past generations have contributed their improvements to the processes of our manufacture."*

Who is not, so to speak, dumb with wonder when he contemplates the agency of STEAM and ELECTRICITY? which may really be said to have altered, within a very few years, and to be every hour altering, the relations of man to his fellow-creatures and towards external nature—giving him a power over the elements, such as no human intellect in any age, in its boldest flights of speculation, ever even dreamed of his being able to acquire? Whatever may be the nature of that subtle, inscrutable, all-pervading force, which presents many of its effects to us under the various names of Electricity, Magnetism, Galvanism—Electro-magnetism, and Magneto-electricity; and whatever its hidden, or at all events indeterminate relations to light, heat, motion, and chemical affinity—or whether these, or any of them, are distinct affections of matter, correlative, and having a reciprocal dependence†—it is certain that our great chemists, both at home and abroad, with Faraday at their head, are patiently prosecuting profound researches, which have already been attended with splendid results, and justify us in believing that we are almost on the threshold of some immense discovery, affecting not only our whole system of physical science, but the social interests of mankind. "The agents of nature," said Sir John Herschel, some twenty years ago, "elude direct observation, and become known to us only by their effects. It is in vain, therefore, that we desire to become witnesses to the processes carried on with such means, and to be admitted into the secret recesses and laboratories where they are effected."‡ How far God may permit the keen eye of man now to penetrate into these *arcana* of creation, who shall say?

Look at the beautiful and practical uses to which we are already able to put these mystic forces or elements—Light and Electricity. By the assistance of the latter, we may be said to have vastly altered our relation to both Time and Space. Let us look for a moment to the past, and then to the future. To the past, when mankind could communicate together orally only, and no further than voices could carry; then, as far and as fast as writing and mechanical means of transit could convey; but now, how is it? Our converse with each other is literally with lightning swiftness; under ocean, § through the air; from one person unseen to another unseen; in different latitudes and longitudes; and, ere long, in different hemispheres! The land is rapidly being covered with a network of electric apparatus for the transmission of thought. We already communicate with ease, under the sea, with Ireland and France! The whole Continent is now nearly connected thus together. I myself, in September last, saw the electric telegraph in process of traversing the Alpine altitudes and solitudes, and could not help often pausing to think how soon those filmy conductors might be transmitting words pregnant with the fate of nations! Then I thought of one of the earliest uses to which the electric telegraph was put in this country; when the murderer's flight from the still-quivering victim of his fiendish passion, was long anticipated by the dread conductors along the line by which he was swiftly travelling in fancied impunity, but only to drop,

* *Discourse on the Study of Natural Philosophy*, p. 64.

† GROVE *On the Correlation of Physical Forces*, passim; and ANSTED'S *Elementary Course of Geology*.

‡ *Disc. Nat. Phil.*, p. 191.

§ Messages can now be *interchanged* by the submarine telegraph, between London and Paris, in thirty or forty minutes: why need it require a fourth of the time? I am told, on high authority, that it is hoped shortly to have the observatories of Paris and Greenwich in *absolutely simultaneous* action! Arago has recently stated that the only hindrances at present existing are of a temporary and local nature, in this country.

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affrighted, into the arms of sternly expectant justice.*

What, again, may not by-and-by be the fruits of our present extensive and unremitting researches on the grand subject of terrestrial magnetism,† and its connection with the influence of the sun? Is it impossible, is it unreasonable, is it in any way unphilosophical, to conceive that in time there may be established new relations, of an amazing character, between our own planet and the starry system around it? I asked this question, the other day, of a distinguished philosopher, and he answered that such speculations were by no means visionary.

Let us pause for a moment only, to contemplate man with his two wondrous instruments — the microscope and the telescope — of which he has been in possession but two centuries, yet what has he not discovered by them? By their aid he stands trembling, astounded, between TWO INFINITUDES!—beholding, in the language of a gifted Frenchwoman, a world in every atom, a system in every star!‡ His soul is dissolved in awe, as though he had been admitted for a moment near the presence of the Almighty Maker of the universe. His faculties are confounded, alike by contemplating the vast and the minute. Distributed everywhere throughout the world, in every element, in the internal moisture of living plants and animal bodies, carried about in the vapour and dust of the whole atmosphere of the earth, exists a mysterious and infinite kingdom§ of living creatures, of whose existence man had never dreamed till within the last two centuries, when his senses were so prodigiously assisted by the microscope! He now beholds, as I and many of us have beheld, a single drop of water instinct with visible, moving, active—ay, and evidently happy life, myriad-formed —every individual consummately organised by our own omniscient Maker! Within the space of a single grain of mustard-seed may be witnessed eight millions of living beings, each richly endowed with the organs and faculties of animal life! Many of them, moreover, are beautiful exceedingly, and of perfect symmetry and proportion. "Who can behold," says an eminent living microscopist, (Mr Prichard), "these hollow living globes, revolving and disporting themselves in their native elements with as much liberty and pleasure as the mightiest monster in the deep—nay, a series of such globes, *one within the other*, alike inhabited,

* The murderer Tawell.

† It was, I believe, our countryman, Roger Bacon, who nearly six centuries ago first discovered the property of the magnet in pointing to the North Pole. Mr Faraday, our illustrious living countryman, has recently made a discovery in magnetism which has been pronounced "beyond doubt the most important contribution physical science has received since the discoveries of Newton concerning the law of force in gravitation, and the universal action of that force." It is, that those substances which the magnet cannot attract, it *repels:* and whilst those which it *does* attract arrange themselves parallel to the magnetic axis, those which it repels, arrange themselves *exactly across it*—that is, at right angles—in an equatorial direction. This is the great governing law above referred to by Mr Ansted, and in terms by no means exaggerated. Since this paper was read, Mr Faraday announced, in his deeply interesting Lecture at the Royal Institution, on the 21st January 1853, the results of a long series of recent nice magnetic experiments by himself, establishing that the doctrine hitherto received, as to the action of the magnetic force, cannot be true. These results prove, in only apparent inconsistence with those obtained by the eminent German philosopher, Plücker — that, of two or more different bodies, the most diamagnetic is more so, *in relation to the others*, at increasing distances from the magnet. The observations of both Faraday and Plücker disprove the law of magnetic action being *always* inversely as the square of the distance; for there are *perhaps* cases in which that law will apply. That there is a magnetic relation between the Earth and the Sun, Mr Faraday illustrated by the remarkable fact, that there is an *exact coincidence* between the variation of the Sun's spots, and that of the Earth's magnetism—a *decennial* change, the existence of which had been established by our distinguished countryman, Colonel Sabine, in conformity with the results of careful observation made by MM. Schwabe and Lamont, on the corresponding variations of the Sun's spots and the magnetic needle.

‡ Madame de Stael. "Chaque monde peut-être n'est qu'une atome, et chaque atome est un monde." See also HERSCHEL'S *Disc. on Nat. Phil.* 115.

§ PRICHARD on *Infusoria*, pp. 1, 2; edit. 1852.

and their inhabitants alike participating in the same enjoyment—and not exclaim with the Psalmist: 'How wonderful are thy works, O Lord! *sought out* by all them that have pleasure therein!'" * When we attempt to fix our faculties on such objects as these, we are apt to lose the control over them, and to become powerless amidst conflicting conditions of wonder and perplexity. What are the *purposes* of all these stupendous acts of creation, preservation, and incessant reproduction? And why is man permitted, and thus late in his history, these tremulous glances into infinity? The more he sees, the more assured he becomes, that what he sees must be absolutely as *nothing* to what he might see, were his faculties only a very little increased in strength. "Every secret which is disclosed, every discovery which is made, every new effect which is brought to view, serves to convince us of numberless more which remain concealed, and which we had before no suspicion of." † What has now become of our former notions of the *minute?* I cannot answer for others; but the states of mind into which the contemplation of these subjects has often thrown me, is beyond the power of description. "In wonder," finely observes Mr Coleridge, "all philosophy began; in wonder it ends; and admiration fills up the interspace. But the first wonder is the offspring of ignorance; the last is the parent of adoration. The first is the birth-throe of our knowledge; the last is its euthanasy ‡ and *apotheosis.*" §

* PRICHARD on *Infusoria*, p. 2.

† Bishop BUTLER, *Sermon* XV. — *Upon the Ignorance of Man.*

‡ *Εὐθανασία* — *ω*, *θάνατος* — a *good*, an *easy* death.—I cannot refrain from quoting a passage from good old Bishop Hall, in which this word is used very beautifully:—

"But let me prescribe and commend to thee, my son, this true spirituall meanes of thine happy *euthanasia*, which can be no other than this faithfull disposition of the labouring soul, that can truly say, 'I know whom I have believed.'"—*Balm of Gilead.*

§ *Aids to Reflection*, Aphorism ix. p. 178, edit. 1843. The aphorism is followed by a brief series of profound and instructive reflections, headed *Sequelæ, or Thoughts suggested by the preceding Aphorism.*

But what language is brilliant or strong enough to afford the faintest conception of man's discoveries in the heavens by means of his telescope, and the transcendent exertions of his intellect which it has called forth? Let us see if we can indicate a few results, and a very very few only, in these radiant regions.

To our naked eye are displayed, I believe, about three thousand stars, down to the sixth magnitude; and of these, only twenty are of the first, and seventy of the second magnitude. Thus far, the Heavens were the same to the ancients as they are to ourselves. But within the last two centuries our telescopes have revealed to us countless millions of stars, more and more astonishingly numerous, the farther we are enabled to penetrate into space! Every increase, says Sir John Herschel, in the dimensions and power of instruments, which successive improvements in optical science have attained, has brought into view multitudes innumerable of objects invisible before; so that, for anything experience has hitherto taught us, the number of the stars may be really infinite, in the only sense in which we can assign a meaning to the word. Those most recently rendered visible, for instance, by the great powers of Lord Rosse's telescope, are at such an inconceivable distance, that their light, travelling at the rate of 200,000 miles *a second*, cannot arrive at our little planet in less time than *fourteen thousand years!* Of this I am assured by one of our greatest living astronomers. Fourteen thousand years of the history of the inhabitants of these systems, if inhabitants there be, had passed away, during the time that a ray of their light was travelling to this tiny residence of curious little man! Consider, for a moment, that that ray of light must have quitted its dazzling source *eight thousand years* before the creation of Adam! We have no faculties to appreciate such ideas; yet are these realities, or there are none, and our fancied knowledge is illusory.

Let us here pause for one moment in our breathless flight through the

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starry infinitude, and ask our souls to reflect on the Almighty Maker of all! Let us fall prostrate before Him, and ask with trembling awe, What real idea have we of His Omnipresence? He is present everywhere, for everywhere he unceasingly acts; but how this is, we feel to be inconceivably far beyond our limited faculties. *Such knowledge* is, indeed, *too high for us—we cannot attain to it;* but He has vouchsafed to tell us that *His throne is in heaven.* Let us learn the impious absurdity of attempting to judge of the Deity by our own notions of great or small, or possible or impossible. What were the thoughts and feelings that led La Place to atheism, we do not know; but how different was the effect of these visions of glory upon the mind of our own immortal Newton! How they expanded and elevated his conception of Almighty power and wisdom! Let his own sublime words speak for themselves: "God is eternal and infinite, omnipotent, and omniscient; that is, He endures from everlasting to everlasting, and is present from infinity to infinity. He is not eternity or infinity, but eternal and infinite, he is not duration or space, but He endures, and is present. He endures always, and is present everywhere; and by existing always, and everywhere, constitutes duration and space." *

Returning, for a moment, to the subject which we have quitted, let us ask, with Sir John Herschel—*For what purposes* are we to suppose such magnificent bodies scattered through the abyss of space?

Again, we can now detect binary, physically binary, stars; that is to say, a primary, with a companion actually revolving round it. "Thus," says Captain Smyth,† "is the wonderful truth opened to view, that two suns, each self-luminous, and probably with an attendant train of planets, are gyrating round their common centre of gravity under *the same dynamical laws which govern the solar system;* that is, not precisely like our planets round one great luminary, but where each constituent, with its accompanying orbs, revolves round an intermediate point or fixed centre! This is a great fact, and one which, in all probability, Newton himself never contemplated."

What, again, are we to say to the splendid spectacle, and what can be the conceivable condition of existence which it indicates, of richly vari-coloured double stars—of ruddy purple, yellow, white, orange, red, and blue! The larger star is usually of a ruddy or orange hue—the smaller, blue or green! "What illumination," says Sir John Herschel, "*two suns*—a red and a green, or a yellow and a blue one—must afford a planet, circulating about either! And what charming contrasts and grateful vicissitudes—a red and a green day, for instance, alternating with a white one, and with darkness—might arise from the presence or absence of one or *both* above the horizon!" ‡ What gorgeous scenes are these for the imagination of man to revel in!

Again, we have at length accomplished the feat, deemed by the greatest astronomers, till within even the last few years, absolutely impossible, of measuring the distance of a fixed star. We have accomplished this in two instances:—The nearest, § one of the brightest stars in the Southern Hemisphere, is at *twenty-one millions of millions* of miles' distance; that is, its light would require three years and a quarter to reach us. The second ‖ is not nearer to us than *sixty-three billions* of miles off, and its light requires upwards of ten years to reach us. These inconceivable distances have been measured to the utmost nicety, and, as the Astronomer-Royal recently explained to a popular audience, really by means of a common yard-measure! But what proportion is there between even these enormous distances, and those of the newly-discovered stars

* From the *Scholium*, annexed to the Principia.

† P. 235. Printed for private circulation only, but presented by the eminent author to the writer, for the purposes of this paper.

‡ Herschel's *Astronomy*, p. 395.

§ *α, Centauri.* ‖ 61, *Cygni.*

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above spoken of, whose light requires fourteen thousand years, travelling at the rate of two hundred thousand miles a second, to reach us? It is absurd to suppose that either figures, or, indeed, any other mode of communicating ideas to the mind of man, can enable him to appreciate such distances.

Again, man, little man, can positively ascertain the weight of the Sun and his planets, including even the remotest—Neptune—of which I have more to say presently; and, as a matter of detail, can express that weight in pounds avoirdupois, and down even to grains! Think of man weighing the masses of these wondrous, enormous, and immensely distant orbs!

Again, are we really aware of the rate at which we, on our little planet, are at this moment travelling in space, in our orbit round the sun? I have, within the last few days, put one of our best practical astronomers to the trouble, which he most courteously undertook, of computing our rate of transit through space in our journey round our central luminary; and here I give you his results. While I was journeying yesterday from London to Hull—some 200 miles—the planet, on which we were creeping by steam-power, had travelled some 410,000 miles through space! So that we are, while I am speaking, whirling along, without being in the least physically sensible of it, at the rate of upwards of 68,000 miles an hour*—more than a thousand miles a minute—and nineteen miles between two beats of a pendulum, or in a second of time. I ask again—*Do we ever attempt to realise such bewildering facts?*

Nor is this all.—I may surprise some present by assuring them that the earth is believed, by all our great astronomers, to have at this moment, not two motions only, but *three!*—one round its axis, which we can make evident to the very eye;† another round the sun; but what of the *third?* A most remarkable, and equally mysterious fact: that the sun and all his planets are moving with prodigious velocity, through space, at the rate of a hundred and fifty millions of miles a-year, towards a particular point in the heavens, a star [a] in the constellation Hercules! "Every astronomer who has examined the matter carefully," says the present Astronomer-Royal, "has come to the conclusion of Sir William Herschel, that the whole solar system is moving bodily towards a point in the constellation Hercules!"‡

What means this? and how can we sufficiently estimate the critical and refined observations and calculations by which the fact is established? If we be thus sweeping through the heavens, the constellations must be altogether altered to the eyes of our remote posterity, who may thereby be disabled from appreciating the language in which we spoke of them, or the imaginable resemblances which we assigned to them. And dare one dream for a moment of our little globe being ordained to encounter obstruction in its pathway, and being suddenly split into fragments by some huge orb, or inflicting a similar fate on one as small as, or smaller than, itself? Splendid stars have suddenly appeared, and as suddenly disappeared from the heavens, leaving us no means whatever of conjecturing the cause of these phenomena. §

Again, the sun, ‖—which we feel,

* While the earth moves 68,805 miles an hour, Mercury moves more than 100,000 miles; whence chemists use his symbol to denote *quick*-silver. While we are disposed to regard this as a rapid motion round the sun, what must the inhabitants of Neptune, who travels only three and a half miles a second, think of us, who are whirling round the sun at six times the speed of Neptune?

† By the experiment of M. Foucault, with the pendulum.

‡ *Lectures on Astronomy*, 2d edit. 1849.

§ On the evening of the 11th November 1572, Tycho Brahe, the great Danish astronomer, on returning from his laboratory to his dwelling-house, was surprised to find a group of country folk staring at a star, which he was certain had not existed half an hour before. It was so bright as to cast a perceptible shadow. It surpassed Jupiter at his brightest! and was visible at mid-day. In March 1574, it disappeared totally and for ever. Is there not here an infinite field for conjecture? And this is by no means the only similar instance of the kind.

‖ I am informed by an astronomical friend, that the most recent observations confirm

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which we see, and observe; which dazzles us every day; which rises and sets, as we say, magnificently every morning and evening—remains a profound mystery with reference to its nature, and how its supply of light and heat is maintained. "How so enormous a conflagration," says Sir J. Herschel, "is kept up, is a great mystery, which every discovery in either chemistry or optics, so far from elucidating, seems only to render more profound, and to remove farther the prospect of probable explanation."*

Yet once more. We are making latterly, almost monthly, discoveries in the heavens, of a most remarkable character, with reference to certain small bodies known by the name of Ultra-Zodiacal planets. I have paid close attention to them, and received constant information on the subject from that able and vigilant astronomer, Mr Hind.† Listen, now, to a true tale of wonder:—Between the orbit of Mars and Jupiter, there is, according to an undoubted and remarkable law of progress of planetary distance in our system, a space of three hundred and fifty millions of miles; and this immense interval had no known tenants up to the commencement of the present century. But so great an *unoccupied* space was long ago found to be an interruption of this order of planetary progression of the magnitudes of the planetary orbits: a curious discovery of the Prussian astronomer Bode. After long and deep revolving of the subject, he conjectured that a planet, now wanting, must have existed in this vast interval of space; and that one might, in time, be discovered there. Imagine, therefore, the astonishment with which, during the first seven years of the present century, four little planets—Ceres, Juno, Pallas, and Vesta—were discovered, *within this very interval*, revolving in most eccentric orbits! "It has been conjectured," said Sir John Herschel, writing about twenty years ago, "that these planets are *fragments of some greater planet*, formerly circulating in that interval, but which has been blown to atoms by an explosion; and that more such fragments exist, and may be hereafter discovered. These may serve as a specimen of the dreams in which astronomers, like other speculators, occasionally and harmlessly indulge."‡ A dream? Will it be believed, that within this last seven years, no fewer than TWENTY more of these mysterious tenants of that identical interval of space have been discovered!—NINE of them within this very year, 1852—the last of them by Mr Hind, on the 18th of this present month of December! Are not these, as it were, the elements of an astronomical romance?—The orbits and motions of these little planets are all of the same character, and may be truly said to exhibit excessively complicated vagaries, such as are very likely to bring them into collision with each other! And in the opinion of astronomers, the most reasonable explanation of these astonishing phenomena is, that this zone of planets really consists of the fragments of some great one shattered by an internal convulsion!§

To what reflections does not such a possibility (and no one is entitled, as I believe few are now disposed, to call it chimerical) give rise! If the sup-

the supposition that the sun is a black opaque body, with a luminous and incandescent atmosphere, through which the solar body is often seen in black spots, frequently of enormous dimensions. A single spot seen with the naked eye, in the year 1843, was 77,000 miles in diameter. Sir John Herschel, in 1837, witnessed a cluster of spots, including an area of 3,780,000 miles! The connection between these spots and the earth's magnetism, has been already alluded to. *Ante*, p. 25, Note II.

* HERSCHEL'S *Disc. on Nat. Phil.* p. 313. *Astron.* 212.

† This gentleman's recent publication, entitled *The Solar System; a Descriptive Treatise upon the Sun, Moon, and Planets, including all the Recent Discoveries*, (Orr & Co., London), 1852, is by far the best extant, for its accurate and comprehensive treatment of the subject in its most recent aspect. The price is almost nominal.

‡ *Astron.* p. 277.

§ There are now [October 1854] *thirty-one* of these asteroids!

"It may yet be found," observes Mr Hind, "that these small bodies, so far from being portions of the wreck of a great planet, were created in their present state; for some wise purpose which the progress of astronomy, in future ages, may eventually unfold."

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position be true that these bodies are planetary fragments, was the globe of which they once formed part destroyed by an internal explosion, or by external collision, or in any other way, under the fiat of the Deity? Was it inhabited at the time, and by beings like ourselves? And was it their destruction? And as we cannot entertain the impious supposition that this possible result was occasioned by accident or negligence, dare we indulge in speculation as to the hidden economy of the heavens, administered by the Omniscient?

But let us now descend for a moment to our own tiny planet, to ask one or two questions concerning it. Its polar and equatorial diameters differ by only twenty-six and a half miles; and the greater of the two—the equatorial—is 7925 miles. When we talk of "descending into the bowels of the earth," therefore, we had better use less ambitious phraseology, and consider our excavations as being, in Sir John Herschel's language, mere scratches of the exterior only; for our deepest mines have never penetrated lower than to the ten-thousandth part of the distance between the earth's surface and its centre.* As far as scientific researches enable us to conjecture, we should conclude that when our earth was first set in motion,† it must have been somewhat soft, in order to have produced its present undoubted spheroidal form.‡ But what is the real nature of the earth's interior? Transcendental mathematics fully recognise the principle of internal fluidity or fusion; while all our actual observations point to the existence of heat in a greater degree the lower we go. M. Humboldt, indeed, tells us that, at only thirty-five miles' distance from the earth's surface, "the central heat is everywhere so great, that *granite itself is held in fusion!*"§ Our internal fires seem to find a vent by means of earthquakes and volcanoes.

Is this planet of ours destined, then, to share the conjectured fate of that whose fragments are still circulating in space around us, and being in such rapid succession discovered by our vigilant watchers of the heavens?

Once more, however, let us ascend into the resplendent regions which we have so suddenly quitted, in order to alight upon, and scrutinise a mere speck among them—to advert to an astronomical discovery that will for ever signalise our age, as the result of a vast stretch of human intellect, one that would have gladdened the heart of NEWTON himself. I allude to the discovery, six years ago, of the planet Neptune.

In the year 1781, Sir William Herschel at once almost doubled the boundaries of the solar system, by his brilliant discovery of the planet Uranus,‖ at the distance of eighteen hundred

* HERSCHEL'S *Discourse*, 288.

† In one of Sir Isaac Newton's *Four Letters to Dr Bentley*, and which are worth their weight in gold to every inquiring mind, occurs the following memorable passage. To the second question of Dr Bentley, Sir Isaac replied that the present planetary motions could not have sprung from any natural cause alone, but were impressed by an intelligent agent. "To make such a system, with all its motions, required a Cause which understood and compared together the quantities of matter in the several bodies of the Sun and planets, and the gravitating powers resulting thence; the several distances of the primary planets from the Sun, and of the secondary ones from Saturn, Jupiter, and the Earth, and the velocities with which these planets could revolve about those quantities of matter in the central bodies; and to compare and adjust all these things together, in so great a variety of bodies, argues that Cause to be not blind and fortuitous, but very well skilled in mechanics and geometry." In his Optics (Query 28) this great man asks—"How came the bodies of animals to be contrived with so much art, and for what ends were their several parts? Was the eye contrived without skill in optics, and the ear without knowledge of sounds?" Doubtless his mind had present to it the sublime question of the Psalmist: *He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? He that formed the eye, shall he not see?*—Psalm xciv. 9.

‡ And the earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep; and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.—Gen. i. 2.

§ *Kosmos*, vol. i. p. 273.

‖ Uranus was the father of Saturn; and the Prussian astronomer Bode, suggested, that as the new planet was next to Saturn, it should be called by the name of Uranus. M. La Place, however, generously insisted on its bearing the name of its English discoverer. It passed, however, by the name of the *Georgium Sidus*, in compliment to Geo. III., the munificent patron of astro-

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and twenty-two millions of miles from the sun, and travelling in his orbit in thirty thousand six hundred and eighty-six days, or fifteen thousand five hundred miles an hour. This dignified visitant has a diameter of thirty-six thousand miles, and is attended by six satellites during his eighty-four years' tour round his and our central luminary. Thus much for *Uranus*.

Many years afterwards, certain differences were observed by French and English astronomers between this planet's true places, and those indicated by theoretic calculation; and at length it was suggested that the cause might be attributed to the perturbing influence of *some unseen planet*. They thought, however, that if this were really the solution of these differences between calculation and observation, it would be almost an impossibility to establish the fact, and ascertain the unseen planet's place in the heavens. This was the deliberate opinion of M. Eugene Bouvard, one of the greatest French geometers of the day. Nevertheless, Mr Adams, an English, and M. Le Verrier, a French astronomer, unknown to, and entirely independently of each other, commenced a series of elaborate and profound mathematical calculations, proceeding on different methods, to solve the great problem, which was thus stated by M. Le Verrier:—"Is it possible that the inequalities of *Uranus* are due to the action of a planet situated in the ecliptic, at a mean distance double that of *Uranus*? If so, *where is the planet actually situated, what is its mass, and what are the elements of its orbit?*" Our distinguished countryman, Mr Adams, a Fellow of St John's College, Cambridge, and whom I saw receive the gold medal of the Royal Society, as some token entertained of his transcendent merits as a mathematician, had directed his attention to this matter in the year 1843—his object being to "ascertain the probable effect of a more distant planet;" and he succeeded in obtaining an approximate solution of the *inverse problem of perturbations;* that is to say, given—certain observed disturbances; to find the positions and paths of the body producing them. In other words, the great planet Uranus was occasionally disturbed in his course by the attraction of an *unknown body;* and the object was to determine the fact without waiting for the visible existence of that body.

It would be vain to attempt to make the nature of these grand calculations* popularly intelligible; nor am I mathematician enough to presume to make the attempt. These twin sons of science were supremely successful. On the 23d September 1846, the splendid stranger became visible, in diameter about forty-two thousand miles† —that is, upwards of five times that of our earth, and attended by at least one visible satellite. Neptune performs his stately journey round the sun, from which he is distant two thousand eight hundred and fifty millions of miles, in one hundred and sixty-six years, or sixty thousand six hundred and twenty-four days!

Thus not only did these two astronomers point out where this huge distant orb would be found in such immensely distant space, but weighed its mass, numbered the years of its revolution, and told the dimensions of its orbit!

Would that France and England might never again be seen in any but such glorious rivalry as they thus exhibited, in the persons of these their highly-gifted sons;—who, by the way, must be acknowledged by the unknown philosopher of whom I spoke some time ago, to have been certainly a very superb pair of electrical calculating machines!

What, however, is the above, or what

nomical science, until the year 1851, when, in the Nautical Almanac of that year, it was called by the name of Uranus—a change made with the disinterested concurrence of the present Sir J. Herschel, the modest son of the great discoverer. See Mr HIND's *Solar System*, p. 119.

* Till within the last thirty years, it was considered that our English mathematicians were inferior to their continental brethren in the higher departments of mathematics; but I believe it is generally admitted that the former are now equal to any in the world.

† Mr Hind says about thirty-one thousand.

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are any other discoveries, when placed by the side of that of Gravitation by the immortal Newton? This, it were hardly extravagant to regard as an exercise of celestial genius, by which it seemed to have gained the true key to the motions of the whole universe. The whole material universe, says Sir David Brewster, was spread before the discoverer of this law: the Sun with all his attendant planets—the planets with all their satellites; the comets whirling about in every direction in their eccentric orbits; and the system of the Fixed Stars stretching to the remotest limits of space! *

The minds of even ordinary men expand, but at the same time droop, while contemplating such amazing and unapproachable intellectual power as this. Dr Thomas Brown, one of the most distinguished modern Scottish teachers of mental and moral philosophy, thus speaks of Newton: "The powers and attainments of this almost superhuman genius, at once make us proud of our common nature, and humble us with a sense of our disparity. If," he continues, "the minds of all men, from the creation of the world, had been similar to the mind of Newton, is it possible to conceive that the state of any science would have been at this moment what it now is, or in any respect similar, though the laws which regulate the physical changes in the material universe had continued unaltered, and no change occurred, but in the simple original susceptibilities of the mind itself?" What a question for a speculative mind!

But it is time to ask, why are we thus wandering amid the splendid solitudes of heaven? Why, to echo a question already hinted at, has man been *permitted*, thus late too in his history, to make himself so far, if one may so speak, familiar with infinitude? He sinks from these dazzling regions bewildered and overwhelmed; as though the Finite had been paralysed by momentary contact with the Infinite; and is relieved to find himself once again upon his little native earth—his appointed home, and scene of pilgrimage and probation. Here again, however, he finds everything unexhausted, inexhaustible, accumulating upon, and overwhelming him, whichever way he turns. Yet a new light gleams upon him, while he directs his wandering eyes towards the inner portions of the crust of that earth which he had trod for so many ages, without dreaming of what was lying beneath, and destined one day to be exposed to his wondering eyes. What would have been the effect on Aristotle's mind, of our geological discoveries? Man now perceives indubitable traces of past scenes of existence, of which all his recorded history has said nothing; traces apparently reserved, in the Providence of God, to be examined and pondered in only these our own times, after so many ages of concealment. Far beneath the surface of the earth, we discover the fossilised remains of its ancient tenants, who seem to have occupied the globe at different periods—probably, too, at vast intervals, and under widely different, but perfectly appropriate, circumstances and conditions. They appear to have been placed upon it at a given period, for a specified purpose, in a determined order; and having unconsciously accomplished that purpose, they mysteriously disappear, but in a wonderful order, and leave behind them the still visible and incontestable proofs of their past existence. O, how eloquent, how deeply suggestive, are these mute vouchers of past economies! instituted and sustained by one and the same Almighty Being, who, by the word of His power, upholds present existence! Many of these remains appear to us huge and monstrous; and huge and fearful they undoubtedly seem to have been, beyond any creatures inhabiting the earth within our time.—*Our time?* What do I mean? Who are WE? MAN: concerning whom all geology is, with

* *Life of Newton*, p. 153. When Newton began to find his calculations verifying the sublime discovery of the law of gravitation, he became too agitated to pursue them, and intrusted the completion of the details to a friend. When before has any other human breast vibrated with anxieties such as these?

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an awful significance, absolutely *silent*, through all its centuries and ages, how continuous and remote soever they may be, since it owns that it has to deal only with times anterior to the appearance of Man upon the appointed scene of his lordship—a scene which geology shows to have been carefully prepared for him. No, not the faintest trace of his presence, his footsteps, or his handiwork, can be detected in any of the pages of this stony volume, wherever it has hitherto been opened, though examined never so minutely;—he is as absolute a stranger as though he were not at this moment, and never had been, a denizen of the planet! This negative eloquence of geology has always appeared to me profoundly suggestive. None of its researches in any part of the globe has hitherto succeeded in bringing to light one single fragment of the fossilised frame of man, in any undisturbed geological formation, by which is meant those portions of the earth's crust to which, though the most recent formations in geology, geologists assign a much higher antiquity than any reached by history. It is true that some petrified human skeletons have been found, as, for instance, in that part of the shores of the island of Guadaloupe where the percolation of calcareous springs speedily petrifies everything subjected to their influence. There is a solitary specimen of a petrified skeleton, found at that island under such circumstances, now to be seen in the British Museum; and which a celebrated anatomical friend of mine regards, on account of certain peculiarities in the pelvis, as having been the skeleton of a negro. If this be so, its date must be, of course, subsequent to the discovery of Guadaloupe by Europeans.* It is not, in other words, the skeleton of one of the Caribs, the original inhabitants; and cannot be more than between two and three hundred years old. One or two other human skeletons have been found, which may be similarly accounted for.

Thus, then, the new and brilliant science of geology attests that man was the last of created beings in this planet. If her *data* be consistent and true, and worthy of scientific consideration, she affords conclusive evidence that, as we are told in Scripture, he cannot have occupied the earth longer than *six thousand years*.†

Sir Isaac Newton's sagacious intellect had arrived at a similar conclusion from different premises, and long before the geologist had made his researches and discoveries. "He appeared," said one who conversed with him not long before his death, and has carefully recorded what he justly styles "a remarkable and curious conversation," "to be very clearly of opinion, that the inhabitants of this world were of a short date; and alleged as one reason for that opinion, that all arts—as letters, ships, printing, the needle, &c. —were discovered within the memory of history, which could not have happened if the world had been eternal; and that there were visible marks of ruin upon it, which could not have been effected by a flood only."‡

Man cannot shut his eyes upon the actual revelations of geology, any more than he can upon the written revelations contained in the Scriptures. It were foolish, nay dangerous, and even impious to do so. We may depend upon it that God designed us, and permitted us, for wise purposes, to make these astonishing discoveries, or He would have kept them for ever hidden from our sight; and, forsooth, shall we then turn round upon our Omniscient Maker, and venture to tell Him that He is contradicting His written word? What a spectacle for men and angels! The Creature and its Creator, the Finite and the Infinite, at issue! For indeed it would, and must needs be so. Infinite Goodness and Wisdom have presented to us the Scriptures as being the eternal truth of God, who has so accredited it to the faculties which He himself has given us for discovering truth, that we have reverently received it as such; countless millions of His creatures have

* A.D. 1493.

† Hitchcock, *Religion of Geology*, p. 157.

‡ Brewster's *Life of Newton*, p. 365.

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lived and died in that belief, and among them the mightiest intellects —the best and greatest of our species; and yet it is to be imagined that they have all had only a *strong delusion* sent them *that they should believe a lie*, and in that lie should live and die! Nay, but let us not thus judge the Deity, who does not deceive his creatures. Yea, *let God be true, but every man a liar*.

If, then, the written word of God be true, His works cannot contradict it, however our folly and presumption may make it for a time so appear; and, on the opposite assumption, we are to suppose that the Author of Nature has expressly revealed to us, in this latter day, some of the former conditions of the earth, only in order to contradict His own written Word previously given to us for our guidance in this transitory scene of being! And is this, then, to be the sum and substance of the good which geology has done mankind? It is not so—it cannot be so; nothing but weakness or wickedness can thus wrest geology from its true tendency and purpose, and convert it from a witness to the truth, into a proof of falsehood.

One who may perhaps be regarded as exhibiting the highest condition of the intellect of this age, and thoroughly imbued with the spirit of philosophy —of which he is its leading exponent and representative — has placed on record his deliberate conviction that "the study of natural philosophy, so far from leading man to doubt the immortality of the soul, and to scoff at revealed religion, has, on every well-constituted mind, a natural effect directly the contrary. The testimony of natural reason," continues Sir John Herschel—for it is he of whom I speak —"on whatever exercised, must of necessity stop short of those truths *which it is the object of revelation* to make known; but while it places the existence and principal attributes of a Deity on such grounds as to render doubt absurd, and atheism ridiculous, it unquestionably opposes no natural or necessary obstacle to further progress. . . . . The character of the true philosopher is to hope all things not impossible, and to believe all things not unreasonable." He proceeds, in an admirable spirit, to say, that we must take care that the testimony afforded by science to religion, be its extent or value what it may, shall be at least independent, unbiassed, and spontaneous; and he reprobates not only such vain attempts as would make all nature bend to narrow interpretations of obscure and difficult passages in the sacred writings, but the morbid sensibility of those who exult and applaud when any facts start up explanatory, as they suppose, of some Scriptural allusions, and feel pained and disappointed when the general course of discovery in any department of science runs wide of the notions with which particular passages in the Bible may have impressed such persons themselves. By such it should be remembered that, on the one hand, truth can never be opposed to truth—and, on the other, that error is to be effectually confounded only by searching deep and tracing it to its source.*

Thus far Philosophy, in a true and noble spirit; and it is specially applicable to the subject of Geology.

Geology is to be regarded as a science in gigantic infancy, promising a truly marvellous manhood. It is one so essentially adapted to excite the imagination, that professors of the science are required to exercise a severe restraint upon that faculty; and, discarding all tendency to theorising, approach the sufficiently astounding facts with which they have to deal, in a cold and rigorous spirit of philosophical investigation. It is hard to many to approach it without disturbing prepossessions; and those who cannot get rid of them may, if diligent observers, accumulate facts, but must be content to leave greater intellects to deal with them. This important science has had to contend with great disadvantages —some of them peculiar; but it is overcoming them, and will continue to do so. I shall not indicate what I conceive these peculiar disadvantages

* Herschel, *Disc. on Nat. Phil.* pp. 7–10.

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to be, because they will occur to any one who has even only moderately directed his attention to this splendid subject. As long as the facts of geology are carefully ascertained, and dealt with simply as facts, as those of all other sciences, and it be not attempted to put them together prematurely, and announce confidently the particular tendency which they may really only *seem* to indicate, while their true bearing is in quite an opposite direction—so long, but so long only, geologists may depend upon it that they are contributing to the formation of a science destined, perhaps, to eclipse all others except astronomy, and even rival it. Geology depends on the continual accumulation of observations carried on for ages. If the geologists of the present day should forget this fact, and breathlessly begin to construct theories and systems on the strength of a few coincident facts, they may hereafter be regarded as mere children, and not as philosophers conscious of the grandeur of the inquiries in which they are privileged to take part. The hope, however, of geology is, the sobriety and system with which great numbers of qualified observers are simultaneously prosecuting their inquiries and experiments in so many quarters of the earth. Its structure affords already conclusive evidence not only of formations singularly in unison with each other, though at immense distances, but also of the operation of vast forces, in past ages, of only a conjectural character and mode of operation. Let any one go through the Alps, as I did lately, and the most hasty glance at the confused position of the *strata* will satisfy him that geology has to deal with facts dislocating all suggested hypotheses.

It is, however, the organic remains, animal and vegetable, which are found in these various *strata*, where they have lain hidden for a long series of ages, that present geology in its most attractive aspect, and give the reins to the imagination. What are we to say, for instance, to the visible remnants of a monster, partaking of the nature of a fish and a crocodile, the eyes of which are of such magnitude that each requires a string five feet long to surround it—the diameter of the orbit being eighteen inches? How hideous must such an object have appeared! * There are few of our leading museums that are not enriched with fossil remains of these strange stupendous animals, pointing indubitably to a long succession of ages, when creatures of this kind, with their appropriate animal and vegetable aliment, seem to have had this earth of ours entirely to themselves. This is a state of facts for which our minds were quite unprepared, and with which we may not even yet be competent to deal soberly. I shall, however, quit this deeply interesting subject, with the remark, that as astronomy expands our conceptions of splendour and space, so geology enlarges our ideas of duration and time; while both these magnificent sciences, the farther they are prosecuted, supply the more conclusive and awe-inspiring evidence of the unity of the Creator. And finally, we may safely concur in the observation of an eloquent American writer on these subjects,† that the merest child in a Christian land, in the nineteenth century, has a far wider and nobler conception of the perfections of Jehovah, than the wisest philosopher who lived before astronomy had gone forth on her circumnavigation of the universe. He might have added, and before geology had disclosed His mysterious handiwork in our own inner earth.

Let me, however, now point out a recent fact, which appears to me to have a marvellous significance, and perhaps a designed coincidence. While men were, and continue to be, busily exploring the earth in search of traces of long past existence, endeavouring to establish its vast antiquity, and the changes which it has undergone, we may suddenly behold, reverently be it said! the dread finger of the Deity silently pointing to that same earth, as containing unerring evidence of the

* These dimensions exist in the fossil remains of an *Ichthyosaurus* to be seen in the Geological Museum, in King's College, London.

† Dr Hitchcock, *Religion of Geology*, p. 416.

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truth of His WRITTEN WORD. Let us wend our wondering way to Nineveh, and gaze at its extraordinary excavations. *There* are indeed seen those traces of man which geology has never found; man as he existed near four thousand years ago; man as he acted and suffered; man as he became the subject of God's judgments; man, whose fate had been foretold by the messengers of God! Here behold an ancient and mighty capital, and its cruel and idolatrous people, as it were reproduced before our eyes, and disinterred from the dust and gloom of ages!

O ye *men of Nineveh!* are you indeed already *rising up before us, to condemn us?* *

To my mind these contemplations are pregnant with instruction, and invested with awe. I cannot go to our national museum, and behold there the recently-disinterred monuments of past Assyrian existence, without regarding them by the light of the Scriptures; nor afterwards read the Scriptures, without additional light reflected upon them from these wondrous discoveries. May I, for instance, be really looking upon the idol Nisroch,† of whom I read in Holy Writ, and of the royal parricides of whom it speaks? *So Sennacherib King of Assyria departed, and went and returned, and dwelt at Nineveh. And it came to pass, as he was worshipping in the house of Nisroch his god, that Adrammelech and Sharezer his sons smote him with the sword!* ‡

Surely, surely, we live in an age of wonderful discoveries and coincidences; and it must be our fault if we do not profit by them, as it is our duty to make the attempt.

It seems to me that no rightly-constituted mind can ponder these subjects without being deeply and beneficially affected. It is in vain, however, to reason with one whose mind is insolently made up to treat them with contempt, and to disregard accumulating evidence a hundredfold stronger than induces it to act confidently in the most important concerns of life. A disposition of this kind may in time be visited by a judicial blindness. Let those, on the contrary, of a nobler character, but who have been agitated by doubts from which perhaps few are free, reflect on the benignant dispensation which enables us, by new discoveries in science, to comprehend much that was previously dark in God's revelation through the Scriptures. The book of nature having been thus opened to us for so grand a purpose, may we not humbly hope that that book will not be closed again, before everything that forms still a stumbling-block to belief be removed? There may have been scoffers in former days, whom the discovery to which I am alluding would have startled, and silenced. Had Lord Shaftesbury, and those who thought with him, lived in this our time, let us express a hope that they would be now proclaiming what they once denied; and we cannot be sufficiently thankful to the Supreme Disposer of Events, that it has pleased Him to reserve ourselves, on whom it may be that the ends of the world are come, for a season of greater light!

Let, then, the geologist go on with his researches, and double his discoveries; nay, indefinitely increase their number and significancy. Let him, if he please, and think himself entitled to do so—and it has been sarcastically said that *time* is a cheap commodity with geologists—talk of his millions and millions upon millions of ages, if he think his eye really capable of piercing so far back into eternity. If he be right, he shall never satisfy me that my God is wrong; for *I know in whom I have believed*:—

> He is His own interpreter,
> And He will make it plain!

And now the current of our inquiries is bringing us in view of objects and

* *The men of Nineveh shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here.*—Luke, xi. 32.

† See Mr Layard's admirable and deeply interesting *Nineveh and its Remains*, of which a cheap abridgment, with numerous woodcuts, was published by himself in 1851, entitled, *A Popular Account of Discoveries at Nineveh*, p. 47.

‡ 2 Kings, xix. 36, 37.

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ends demanding our most serious attention.

We have been hitherto inquiring into the INTELLECTUAL development of the age in which we live; and for that purpose have had to pass in rapid review the state of knowledge, and of consequent power, to which the exertions of the human intellect have brought us. We have endeavoured to show that we have no sufficient reason for believing that the intellect of man has either increased or diminished in absolute strength or capacity, as far as we have any means of judging of its action, when fitting occasions arose to develop its energies; that all our researches into the nature of intellectual existence and action have failed of bringing us satisfactory results; that we know that we live, though not how we live; we think, but *know* not how we think; and that it may perhaps have been so ordained by Infinite Wisdom, that impassable bounds should be placed to the anxious and insatiable curiosity of man. I am speaking, I repeat again, solely at present of *human* means and sources of knowledge. One observation, faintly alluded to at the commencement of this paper, surely must, by this time, have forced itself upon us: that while the retrospect of six thousand years—from which I exclude our first parent, whose intellect originally, and before he had darkened the glorious image and likeness in which he was made, may have been endowed with powers transcending all conception by his degenerate though still gifted successors—shows mental philosophy to have been, comparatively speaking, stationary, physical discovery has made, and that latterly, advances so prodigious. Let us attempt in imagination to realise the space gone over, by supposing that greatest among the ancient philosophers, Aristotle, placed in possession of our microscope; our telescope, and other astronomical instruments; our chemical and mechanical instruments, and of their amazing results; and the present state of anatomical, physiological, and geological knowledge. How would he *now* look at the earth! and at the heavens! at the elements! and at MAN? And when the astounded philosopher began at length to look for corresponding advances in metaphysical or psychological knowledge, what should we say? What would he think?

Again, let us suppose ourselves to wake up to-morrow morning in his day!—without steam, without magnetism, without electricity, and all the amazing results which they have effected!—without the telescope! without the microscope, and all their mighty revelations! Nay, even to descend for a moment to particulars, without our gas, without our newspapers, without, in other words, our present physical and intellectual light!—without the steamboat, the railroad, the electric telegraph! What a sudden and dreary eclipse! How confounding and intolerable to those recollecting so different a state of social existence! How we should creep and grope our way about, as in a state of childhood! And shall we continue our course backwards, as far beyond Aristotle's day as his beyond ours? Let us suddenly return to our present day, passing in our flight those two great lights, at intervals of centuries, the two Bacons, Roger and Francis, and Newton; and let us venture to anticipate the dim future, our physical knowledge and position twenty-two centuries hence, if our species shall then, in God's good pleasure, continue upon the earth, the *fiat* not having then gone forth, that *Time shall be no longer!*

Where may then be the seats of mankind?—their language?—their modes of communication?—of government?—their knowledge and use of nature, and its powers?—of the Heavens, and the Earth's relations to them? Will the land and the water have again changed places? May we imagine our posterity, some two or three thousand years hence, exhuming the fossilised remains of their ancestry in every quarter of the globe accessible to the search? Will they be speculating upon our size—so much

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greater, or less than, or the same as their own? — upon our tastes, and habits, and doings? Will our history have perished?—or, if it survive, will it tell of us truly, or falsely? Will the period of our existence be assigned to a date a million of ages anterior to its actual one? Will our ignorance of the laws of nature, as then understood, of the constitution of the human mind, be spoken of with pity and wonder?

Thus, indeed, may we dream and speculate, if we please, as to the possible future, and its conditions with reference to the present and the past. It is with *the present* that man is practically concerned; but of that present, though it may seem paradoxical to say it, both the past and the future are inevitable and essential elements and conditions. Our Now reflects the lights and shadows of what has gone before and is following, and has necessary relations to man's special and limited intellectual faculties. How different are the *Now* of man, and the NOW of his Maker! The difference involves the distinction between Time and Eternity, between the Creator and the Creature, the Finite and the Infinite; and may, if pondered, afford a few trembling gleams of light upon some of the possible conditions of Omniscience. "The whole evolution of time and ages," said More, "from everlasting to everlasting, is collectedly and presentifickly represented to God at once; as if all things and actions were, at this very instant, really present and distinct before him." * How can mortal man address his faculties to such a subject? They are as unfit to deal with it, as the eye to hear, or the ear to see; and it is *something* even to persuade ourselves of that fact and certainty. It may serve to save the soul of man from endless trouble and perplexity, and to reduce it to that condition which alone it is fitted to enjoy. But we do not sufficiently exercise ourselves in this matter. We soothe ourselves with sounds; talking as freely and unconcernedly about — omniscience, omnipotence, and omnipresence, as though they really represented to our understandings the comprehensible attributes of the incomprehensible Deity; as if "by searching" we *had* "found out the Almighty unto perfection!" I am speaking here of the mere unassisted exercise of human reason, which appears to me incompetent to deal fully with our "Now;" and the more that we endeavour to realise this fact, the better shall we find it, for both speculation and practice, in the state of things in which we are conscious that we have been placed by our Maker, and to which our faculties have been adjusted; and in which we are ordained to see through a glass darkly, and to know in part. So it *is;* and the restless, and too often insolent, spirit of man must accommodate itself to that fact: and if he do not, he will assuredly make mental and moral shipwreck. The best thinkers of the present age are those who rigorously act upon this principle, and are most on their guard against urging speculation into regions virtually forbidden to the prying of human faculties; because they are, as I have said, absolutely *unfitted* for them: as is grievously evidenced by the inconsistent and contradictory character of such speculations as we have several times alluded to, the absurdities to which they lead legitimately, and their practical uselessness, and danger.

These observations may serve to connect our present topics with those touched upon before we started on our multifarious inquiries.

They remind us that our inquiry is not limited to the intellectual, but extends to the MORAL development of our species in the present age; and that again remits us to an early observation, that there are profound *relations between intellect and morality*, involving everything that concerns the highest interests of humanity.† The truth is, that intellect stands to morality in the relation of means to an end; that the culture and exercise of the intellect are not, and cannot be, of themselves, final *objects* or *ends*, but

* *Defence of the Philosophic Cabbala*, c. 2.

† *Ante*, p. 3.

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necessarily presuppose and lead to ends. This is a doctrine as old as the great Stagyrite; who, to adopt the eloquent language of the present occupant of the pulpit of Hooker,* "laid the foundation of his ethical system in a recognition of the great truth, that *the end of man is not knowledge, but practice.*†

"A wiser than the Stagyrite has told us that *the whole of man*—his duty, his happiness, his immortality, is comprised in this—*to fear God, and to keep his commandments.*‡

"But an infinitely greater than Solomon has also authoritatively told us, that the entire subjection of the soul to the obedience of FAITH, is not only itself demanded of us, but is also at the same time constituted the only avenue to further knowledge. *If any man* WILL§ *do His will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God.*"

Thus, as it were, with one stride, we have reached the goal—the final end of man—of his existence and doings; to which they all inevitably tend, and the attaining of which contributes the true and only business of life! His intellect is given him to aid in discerning that end, and to enable him to regulate his conduct in this life, so as to attain that which is beyond it—the glorious fruition of a happy Hereafter. But where are we standing? On the shore of a vast deep sea of ethical or moral philosophy; by which I mean simply, that system or theory of principles regulating man as a moral and responsible agent, especially in respect of its motives and sanctions.

This great subject I have approached suddenly, and, right or wrong, in the decisive spirit of one whose mind, after revolving it all his life as a matter of personal concernment, is thoroughly made up upon it. With such a subject, and with such a feeling, it were idle, and even criminal, for a moment, especially on such an occasion as this, to dally or to palter; and I shall speak humbly, and without reserve, my sincere convictions. —In an early part of this paper, it is said that everything depends, in these inquiries, on taking a right point of view; for that there is one, from which all presents to the contemplative mind a lovely but awful order; and another, from which everything appears inextricable and hopeless confusion and contradiction, involving man himself, and all within and without him.

Nearly two centuries ago, Sir Isaac Newton concluded his Optical Queries, by a memorable prediction, as it was justly termed by Dugald Stewart, "that if Natural Philosophy, in all its parts, by pursuing the inductive method, shall at length be perfected, *the bounds of Moral Philosophy will be enlarged also.*" We have not, during the splendid times which have succeeded his own, perfected natural philosophy, but have rigorously pursued the inductive method, and thereby immensely enlarged the bounds of natural philosophy. Have we also enlarged those of moral philosophy? In one respect we have—by incessantly accumulating proofs, each new one on a sublimer scale, of our Almighty Maker's wisdom, power, beneficence, and unity of action, and of His title to the love, adoration, and obedience of His creatures. A living successor of Sir Isaac Newton, Sir John Herschel, tells us that the steady application of the inductive system to physics, necessarily tends to impress something of the well-weighed and progressive character of science on the more complicated conduct of our social and moral relations; that it is thus that legislation and politics come gradually to be regarded as experimental sciences, founded in the moral and physical nature of man, and to be

* Archdeacon Robinson, the Master of the Temple.

† Τὸ δὲ τέλος οὐ γνῶσις, ἀλλὰ πρᾶξις. (Eth. .3.)—The *συμφέρον* and *χρήσιμον* of Aristotle express both of them *non-finality;* and all "goods" coming under either designation, are only *subordinate* goods, implying the existence of something higher and better. With Aristotle, that something was—happiness; with us, it should be the happiness—the only true and ultimate one—secured by salvation.

‡ Eccles. xii. 13.

§ The Greek has a signal significance of expression—ἐὰν τις ΘΕΛΗ τὸ θέλημα αὐτοῦ ποιεῖν.

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constantly accumulating towards the solution of the grand problem — how the advantages of government are to be secured with the least possible inconvenience to the governed.* Perhaps it may be truly said, in passing, that while the steadfast progress of experimental philosophy is one of the grandest features of the age, it is not unaccompanied with danger, in so far as the spirit which it generates may be disposed to address itself, flushed with triumph, to matters which are *not the subject* of experimental treatment.

I have my own opinions concerning the science of political economy, which I need not obtrude upon you; but that legislation and politics depend on fixed principles, however difficult formally to define and agree upon them; and that those principles have relation to the moral and physical nature of man, can no more be doubted, than one can deny the existence, as a distinguishing characteristic of the present age, of a sincere desire to discern and act upon those principles. Into those questions, so unhappily intermingled with violent passions and personal interests, I shall not enter for one moment, because I am satisfied with another — and a vast one it is — what *is* the *moral nature* of man? for the determining that, and the rules of conduct conformable to it, constitute what is called Moral Philosophy. Before proceeding further, let me say, that if you wish really to ascertain the facts on which to reason with reference to man's moral nature, do not go to the speculative moralist, sitting in his library, spinning scheme after scheme of so-called morality, often only fantastic variations of those of long-forgotten predecessors; but go to the lawyer, the physician, the divine, who see human nature from day to day in its practical aspects, — those which are hidden from the eyes of mere talkers and writers, however eloquent and ingenious. The former can tell you of the actual physical and moral condition of our species, in every class of life from the lowest to the highest — even in the highest conditions of modern civilisation. Ask, again, those noble messengers of mercy, who, with only the eye of their heavenly Father upon them, shedding around them a radiance unseen of man, go about *doing good* — visiting those hidden scenes of suffering —

> Where hopeless anguish pours her moan,
> And lonely want retires to die!

Ask them, I say, ask all these classes, to whom human nature in every station, every degree of development and form of manifestation, is exposed — what they think of human nature — of man's moral nature — and what are the conclusions which *their* "experience" has forced upon them. They will tell you of a terrible amount of physical and moral EVIL in existence, *and which must be dealt with.*

Here, perhaps, steps in some philosophical moralist — first asking, how do you account for the existence of it? — and by-and-by another, complacently affirming, by a process of his own, that that supposed evil does *not* exist. Here we are deluged by a tide of disputation, which too often carries off and drowns those whom it overtakes. But there is also a kindred question attended with similar results: the human WILL — or liberty of action. Is there, asks another philosopher, such a thing as the Will? Can it act freely? Or is its action absolutely mechanical and necessary? What, then, are *motives*? And are men, in fact, mere machines? And if so, what becomes of responsibility? On these questions — the two mighty problems of moral science — has mere physical science cast a single ray of light? In spite of some dreams of the day, it may be answered, peremptorily, No. And is it to be told to those who come after us, that in England, in our supposed noontide splendour of intellect, in this nineteenth century, there are some who, to solve these questions, have at length nestled themselves in the absurd and impious old notion of PANTHEISM, and affect to believe that the universe itself constitutes God? That that awful word represents only the aggre-

* *Discourse*, p. 73.

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gate of everything that exists—that whatever is, is God, a substance for ever the same, and everything in existence only a necessary succession of its modes of being! Some of you will be surprised, perhaps, to hear that there are certain so-called philosophers of the present day, who seriously avow these notions; and in doing so, unavoidably remind us of some who, *professing themselves to be wise, became fools.*

It would be a vain, disheartening, humiliating attempt to exhibit the vagaries of the human intellect, in both ancient and modern times, when essaying to deal with these matters. I shall, for my present purpose, divide all existing schools of moral philosophy into two only: that which implicitly or professedly rejects Revelation; and that whose doctrines are implicitly based upon it, and may be designated as constituting Christian morality. The former offers a scheme of conduct, and of motives and sanctions producing it, independently of, and in contradistinction to, those disclosed by the Holy Scriptures; the other, a system based upon them exclusively. The one discards Revelation; the other necessarily discards that which discards Revelation.*

Before proceeding further, in order to do justice between the rival systems, let one give up to the other *all that it has derived from that other.* Let the Bible be supposed banished from among mankind, and be as though it had never existed; but with it must also disappear every ray of light which it has ever emitted, and which has glistened never so faintly through the mist of mythology—not merely all that is *thought* to have been derived, but all that has *in fact* been derived from that radiant source. This must be insisted upon rigorously, as the condition of the argument. But then where are we? To me it seems as though a sun had suddenly fallen from the moral firmament; and all is darkness indeed—all relating to the present, the past, and the future; and in that darkness we grope about hopelessly. We know not how, or why, we were created, nor by whom; we can account for nothing satisfactorily—only blindly guessing; and as for the future, it is a hideous blank to us. We may have vague and perhaps torturing fears from it, but no hopes; we can look only at a puzzling present, in which no man has a right to dictate to another; but might is right, and right and wrong are notions of eternal fluctuation with circumstances. We seem to be unable to act otherwise than as we do; we cannot help ourselves; we have passions and appetites to gratify, and will do so whenever we can; our only motives are derived from the intensity of those passions and appetites, and we have no time to lose, as life is short: so, *let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die*—all dying alike, young, old, rich, poor, good, bad; if, however, we annex any ideas to such distinctions.—What right, let me ask, have we to slaughter the animals, apparently equally adapted with ourselves to their respective elements, and with equal means of enjoyment? And what conception could men form, under these circumstances, of an Almighty Maker?

In this benighted, and bewildered state, let the Bible reappear, with all its teachings and revelations, and a flood of holy light flows from it on man and everything about him. It is absolutely alone in its pretensions to AUTHORITY—as having come from the First Cause of all things,† and con-

* To a revelation there must be two parties—he who makes it, and he to whom it is made. If there *be* a revelation, the discarding it is surely a fearful matter. We have inspired authority for holding that those whom Revelation has not reached, have the law of human action written in their hearts—*their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another.*

† "There is one primary and capital mark of distinction," says Bishop Warburton, "differing Judaism from all other forms of religion; it professes to come from the First Cause of all things, and it condemns every other religion for an imposture. There is nothing more surprising in all Pagan antiquity, than that, amidst their endless [alleged] revelations *not one of them ever made such pretensions as these;* yet there is nothing

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demning every other relation as an imposture. It opens at once to our view our past and our future — our origin and our destiny; that we consist of an immortal soul joined to a mortal body: tells us what are our present condition and relations, not only towards each other, but towards God; what are the rules of our conduct to be observed on earth, as conditions of an after-existence; how evil came into the world, and how its consequences are to be dealt with and obviated; that the intellect and heart of man are not as originally created, but the former is clouded, and the latter corrupted; but that God *has not left himself without witness*, and has implanted in every man a sense of right and wrong—a conscience, however its functions may be disturbed and vitiated by evil habits; that He himself once, in fulfilment of prediction and promise, appeared upon earth for a while, *abolishing death, and bringing life and immortality to light;* that, after death, man shall rise, and receive judgment for the deeds done in the body —a judgment finally determining an eternal condition; that our Maker benignantly regards us as a father his children, with whom he deals tenderly, but equitably; that he desires the love of our whole heart and soul—that we should strive to be pure and holy, as He is; and, finally, sums up our duty in words which none but a debased heart can disregard—*He hath showed thee, O man! what is good; and what doth He require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?*

This is essentially, but in brief, the sublime code of Christian Ethics — adapted to the nature of universal man, addressing itself authoritatively to his moral nature, prescribing no rules for his conduct the propriety of which that nature does not recognise; but, I repeat it again, speaking all this in a voice of paramount awful Authority—yet one which man is at liberty to disobey, at his peril. Now, with this code I, for one, as a poor unworthy worm of the earth, am entirely satisfied. I feel that, in proportion as I attempt and seriously strive to come up to its requirements, my moral and intellectual nature becomes dignified and happy; and that I exhibit the highest qualities of that restored nature, exactly at the point where, unable by searching to find Him out, I trust in Him, I believe Him, implicitly.

Stepping, for a moment, out of the sunlight of this sublime system, I feel myself lowered, perplexed, disheartened, and in despair. The sum of all its teaching is, at one time, that I am a mere machine; at another, that I am impelled by no motives except those petty ones supplied by the apparent expediencies of this transient life only, and complicated calculations as to the tendency of my actions to secure a moment's pleasure or happiness, or contribute apparently to such in others. I am wholly dissevered from a future state; the grave sees the last of me; my inward sense of right and wrong is extinguished; conscience, in its character of witness, accuser, judge, is expelled from its seat, and its very existence alleged to be a dream and a figment. Those, moreover, who would thus denude me of my moral dignity, and annihilate those noble motives by which I would fain regulate my conduct, treat the source from which I derive them as a mere tissue of fictions and delusions, unworthy of being for a moment entertained by an enlightened intellect, in an enlightened age.

A French gentleman, M. Proudhon, who aspires to the character of a philosopher, has recently given out, with what one cannot but regard as an impious complacency, that the age has altogether outgrown Christianity, which, it seems, has "culminated," "hastes to her setting," and will soon "vanish away."* Is, then, the intellectual and moral progress of mankind to achieve, as one of its earliest tro-

which modern writers are more apt to pass over without reflection. The ancient fathers, however, more nearly acquainted with the state of paganism, regarded it with the attention due to so extraordinary a circumstance." —*Divine Legation of Moses*, book iv. § 1.

* See *Reason and Faith*—an admirable little discourse, by Henry Rogers.

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phies, the extinction of Christianity?—of that religion which is now supreme in its hold of the intellect of all the most highly civilised nations of the earth? Where are to be found the proofs of this assertion of a presumptuous infidelity? Is not the Christian religion being at this moment rapidly propagated over the whole earth? And well it may. If its divine pretensions are to be judged of by tendencies and results, must not the bitterest enemy of Christianity admit that, were its pure and holy doctrines universally recognised and acted upon, the earth would have become a moral paradise? Envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness, with every ill they induce—all fraud, hypocrisy, falsehood, violence, and lust—would they not be extinguished? Where would be cruelty, oppression, murder, war? If we are to *know* the *tree by its fruits*, have we not here, indeed, as it were, the tree of moral life, and regeneration of our species? Remove this tree, and what have we in its place? Are we to be left to the fluctuations and contradictory theories and systems of so-called moral philosophers, based on the imaginary fitness of things, and the exclusive adjustment of man to his present state of existence? Whatever I have read of these theories, compels me to compare all *anti* or *non*-Christian schemes of morality, to mere charnel-houses of decayed and decaying opinions, exhibiting, at long intervals, new forms of putrescent vitality. As they repudiate conscience, so they disregard the heart, with all its excellences, vices, and susceptibilities; and yet it is with the *heart man believeth unto righteousness!* It is this act of belief, however, potent and glorious as it is, that some schools of modern philosophy would treat with contempt, and restrain every tendency towards it!

A writer of the present day, and an active upholder of what is called the philosophy of *Utility*—which, as I understand it, seems a dreary doctrine truly, and palsying the noblest sentiments of our nature—in recently advocating its pretensions as the only true system of ethics, spoke sarcastically of all clerical academical teachers of morals, as having an interest in propping up doctrines to which they are pledged, and fitting their philosophy to them, for that unworthy purpose. He proceeds to say, that "the doctrines of the Established Church are prodigiously in arrear of the general progress of thought, and that the philosophy resulting, will have a tendency not to promote, but to arrest progress." This is a confident assertion, levelled virtually at all systems of Christian ethics, if based, as are those of the Church of England, on the fundamental doctrines of Christianity. Long may those doctrines, the doctrines of all Christians, *continue* "prodigiously in arrear of the general progress of thought," if that progress be in the direction of materialism, fatalism, pantheism, or atheism, [I am far, however, from imputing such tendencies to the writer in question, whoever he may be,] in whatever guise it may present itself. Were such to be, indeed, the tendencies of the age, it would be in its dotage, its second childhood. Of this, however, there is no fear; for I do believe the enlightened convictions of the age to be Christian; and that, if there were now among us the giant spirits of a former day—as there assuredly are their giant disciples—a Bacon, a Newton, a Butler—they would be, as those were, reverent believers in Christianity. I can conceive of no degree of intellectual advancement going beyond Christianity. The very idea contradicts all my views of its essential, its divine character and original; and I, for one, never can help denouncing any attempt to insinuate notions to the contrary, by constructing systems of morality silently superseding the doctrines of that Christianity. I would have the test always to be, Does your system recognise, or repudiate, Christianity? and if the latter, unhesitatingly discard the system.

Noone pretends that revelation does not present speculative difficulties to one disposed to look for them, especially in a spirit of supercilious inqui-

sitiveness, and a haughty reliance upon supposed intellectual strength; but they do not disturb him who reflects, with Butler, that those difficulties may have been ordained, and who possesses that universal solvent of doubt and difficulty, a submission and resignation to the Divine will—a faith in revelation, and the Omnipotence from which it emanated. The FAITH of the Christian is a potent reality; as much so in the spiritual, as attraction in the natural world. If the two things may be in any respect compared, faith may be said to be the force which attracts the soul of man to the Deity, as to its proper centre. One who possesses it says, that revelation, whatever be its alleged difficulties—and it professes to contain things passing man's understanding—comes to him accredited by such an accumulation of evidence as overpowers all rational doubts, far transcending any amount of evidence on which he would unhesitatingly act in the most important affairs of life. All evidence seems to me nugatory, if that which supports revelation has served only to deceive honestly exercised faculties, having been permitted —impious supposition!—by a wise and gracious Providence to be arrayed in support of falsehood! But if one cannot entertain the hideous supposition, what is one to do? Yield assent, and evidence it in his life. We have this revelation—a fact inconceivably momentous. What amount of intellect will suffice to get rid of that fact? We must look for an absolute demonstration of the falsehood of its pretensions satisfying the reason of all mankind, and compelling them to surrender their faith in a cunningly-devised fable; whereas the discoveries constantly announced, serve only to corroborate the validity of its external credentials, while the heart continues in all times and places to acknowledge the strength of those which are internal. The Old Testament and the Jews are both existing among us to this day, as a sun with its satellites, the one irradiated by the other, and indicating the existence and character of that other. That precious Book of books they are still guarding with sleepless vigilance; while "Christianity has diffused"—to quote a distinguished living scholar and philosopher—"over the world, the idea of the unity of the human race, once the solitary belief of the Jews, and obscured by their national exclusiveness. The historical philosopher, starting from this idea, has been enabled to view the development of mankind in this light of Christianity: the noblest minds of all Christian nations have recognised a visible and traceable progress of the human race towards truth, justice, and intelligence."* Such is Christianity in its glorious mission of evangelisation—of civilising all the nations of the earth. Without it, there is no civilisation: or that only which is, to quote from the same learned person, "an empty word, and may be, as China and Byzantium show, a *caput mortuum* of real life, a mummy dressed up into a semblance of living reality."† It is to Christianity alone that the world was first indebted for those noble monuments of charity and mercy which are to be found in our hospitals, infirmaries, and other similar institutions. Not a trace of them is to be found among the refined and highly cultivated Greeks and Romans. The Christian agencies, now at work to civilise mankind, are fed direct from the twin founts of inspiration and morality. They are gradually chasing away the shadows of ignorance and sensuality, and melting the manacles and fetters in which cruelty and vice have bound mankind for ages. "The whole world will be Japhetised —which, in religious matters, means, now pre-eminently, that it must be Christianised by the agency of the Teutonic element. Japhet holds the torch of light, to kindle the heavenly fire in all the other families of the one undivided and indivisible human race.‡ Christianity enlightens, and

* *Hippolytus and his Age.* By Chev. Bunsen. Vol. ii. p. 4. (1852).

† Ibid. p. 9.

‡ "We think," says a masterly writer in the *Quarterly Review*, "there are sufficient grounds, without reference to the sacred

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only a small portion of the globe; but it cannot be stationary—and it will advance, and is already advancing, triumphantly over the whole earth, in the name of Christ, and in the light of the Spirit."* That Christianity has a vital influence over individuals, and the nations which they compose. The presence and the absence of it are equally recognised, seen, and felt.

What will the most delicately-adjusted scheme of human ethics do for a man when the *iron is entering his soul;* when he sees long-cherished hopes blighted; when he is writhing under a sense of insult, wrong, and injustice; when some dreadful incurable disease has settled upon him; when he is bidden to *turn his pale face to the wall?* Will it enable him to say, *Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him?* Will it sustain the sinking soul of him on whose eyelids is settling the shadow of death? When we stand with bleeding heart around the grave, and hear the earth falling on the coffin of the dear being who cannot hear it, nor the dread words which accompany it—earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust—whence comes the sublime sound, *I am the Resurrection and the Life,*—while immortality is glowing around us, and a voice whispers, in accents of tender majesty, *It is I, be not afraid!*

Why am I so importunate on this point? Because the Holy Volume, with the morality and religion which spring from it, is everything or nothing to each and every one of us: take it away, and high as may be the intellectual and moral development of the present age, neither philosopher nor peasant has anything to supply the place of that Volume! Man has lost the only link that bound him to his Maker: he begins wildly to doubt His very existence, and the rectitude of His government: he has no clue through the labyrinth of life, and sees no adequate purpose of his existence, nor for his being endowed with such powers, and capable of such aspirations as are his; he is drifting about on the vast ocean of being, without a rudder and without a chart. But give him back that volume—let him hold fast by HIS BIBLE as the only fixed point when all else is fluctuating—and all is lovely light and order. In that light let me walk, till I in my appointed time am called away.

Here we touch the culminating point of all our inquiries.

Wherefore, friends, farewell. The light of a new year is already beaming on our brows. May we all enter, may we all leave it, in a happy and a high spirit!

writings, for arriving at the conclusion, that all races and diversities of mankind are really derived from a single pair; placed on the earth for the purpose of peopling its surface, in both the times before us, and during the ages which it may please the Creator yet to assign to the present order of existence here."—*Quarterly Review*, vol. lxxxvi. pp. 6–7, art. "Natural History of Man." There are also the strongest philological reasons for believing that all languages are derivable from one.

* BUNSEN, *Hippolytus*, ii. 116–17.

THE END.

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